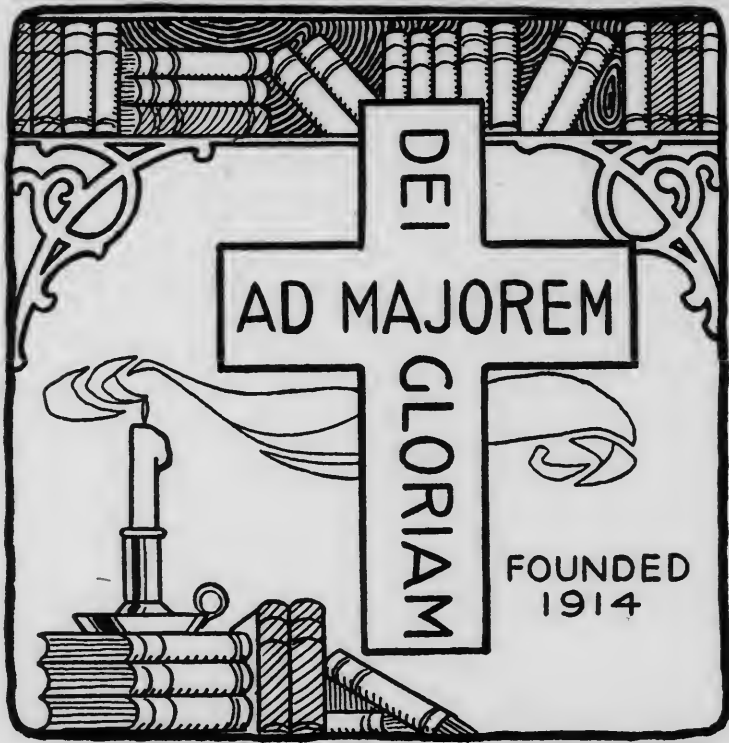


EARLY METHODISM

EASINGWOLD CIRCUIT

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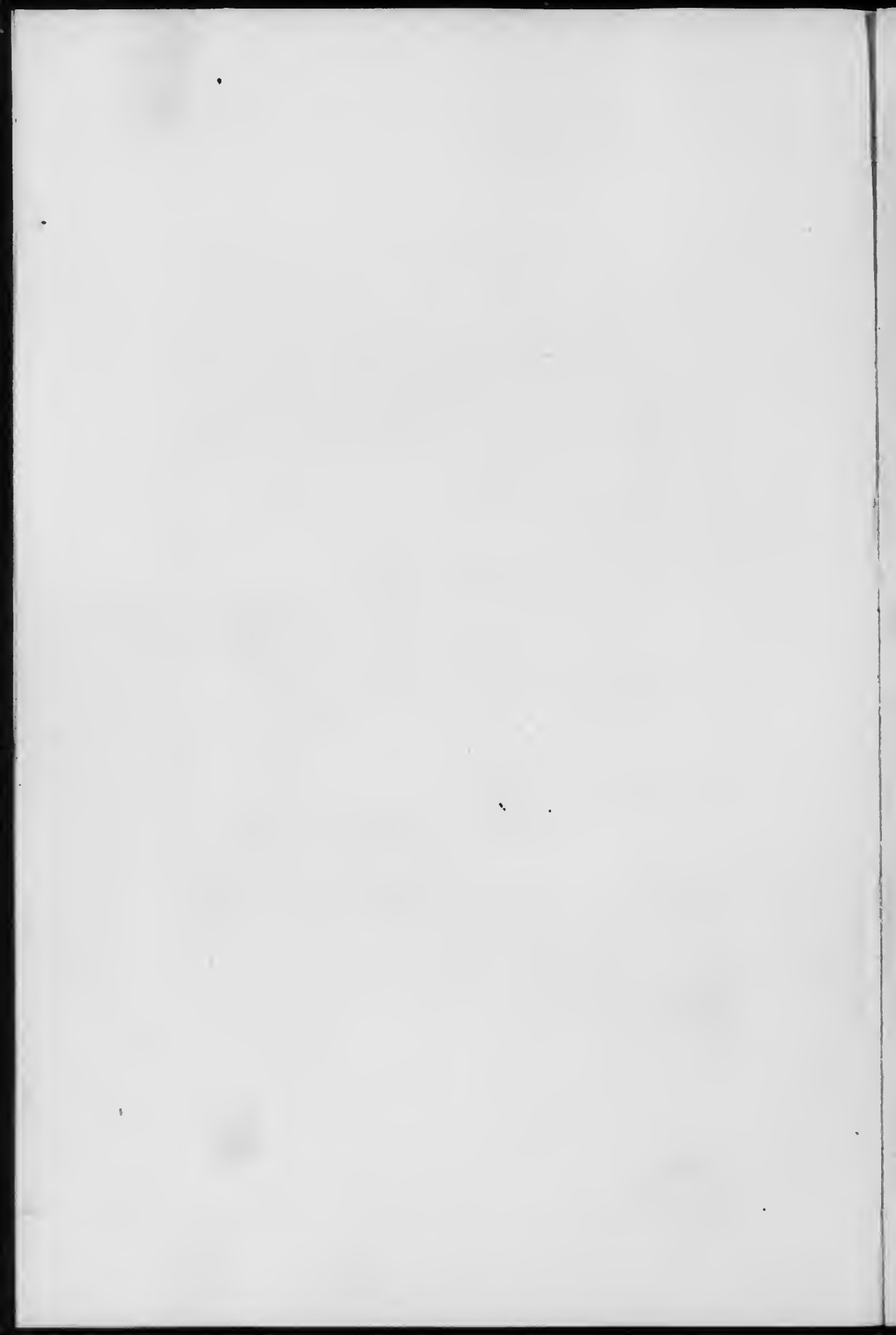


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MEMORIALS
OF
EARLY METHODISM
IN THE
EASINGWOLD CIRCUIT.

BY A LAYMAN.

J. Rookledge.

"WHOSE FAITH FOLLOW, CONSIDERING THE END OF THEIR CONVERSATION. JESUS
CHRIST THE SAME YESTERDAY, AND TO-DAY, AND FOR EVER."—HEB. XIII. 7, 8.

"THE BEST OF ALL IS, GOD IS WITH US."—WESLEY.

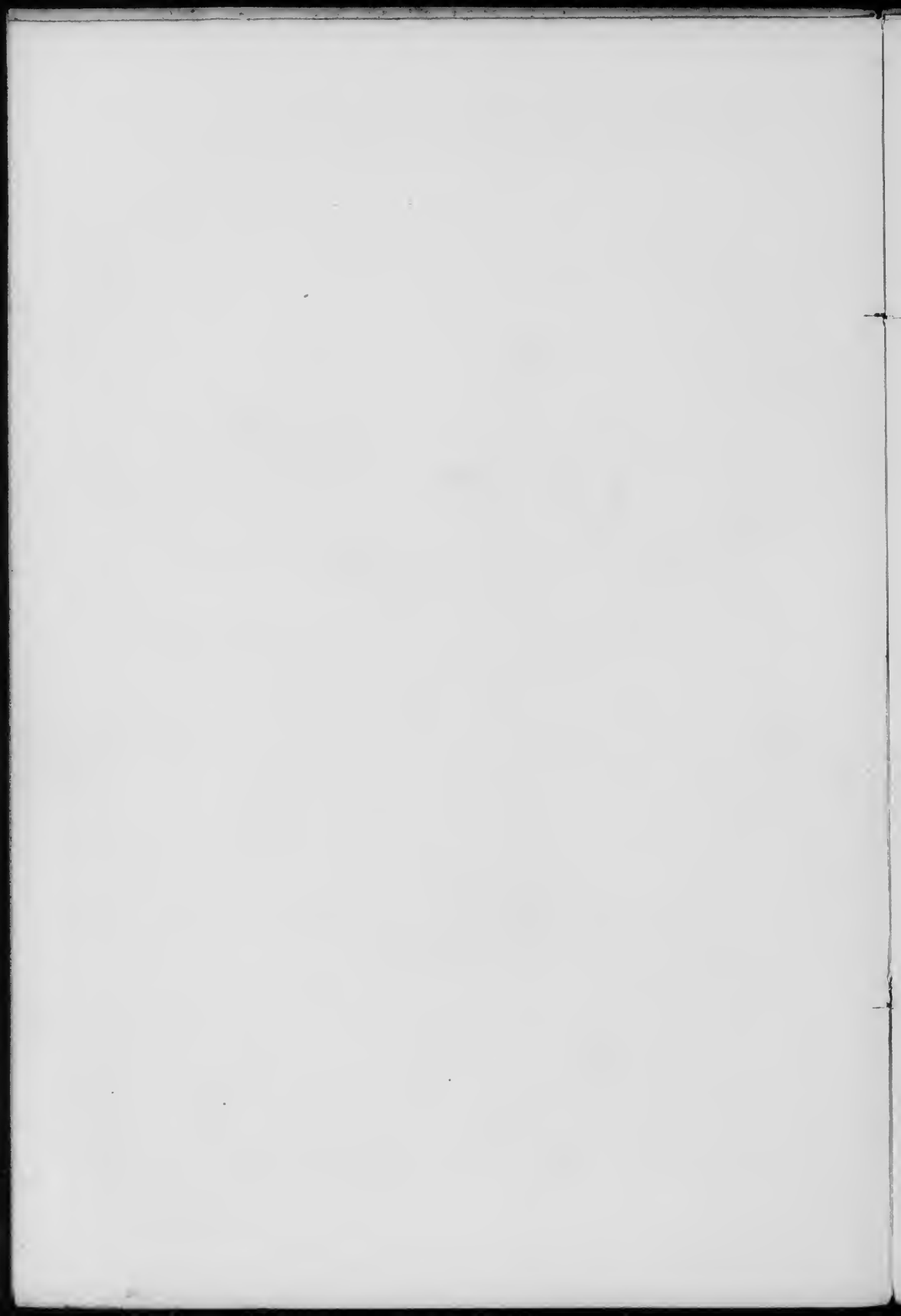
1872.

LONDON :

PRINTED BY HAYMAN BROTHERS AND LILLY,

CROSS ST., HATTON GARDEN, E.C.

TO HIS
FRIENDS AND FELLOW LABOURERS
(BOTH MINISTERS AND LAYMEN)
WHO ARE, AND HAVE BEEN
CONNECTED WITH THE EASINGWOLD CIRCUIT ;
AND ESPECIALLY
TO THOSE LADIES AND GENTLEMEN THROUGH
WHOSE GIFTS AND ENERGIES
THE EFFORT TO ENTIRELY PAY OFF
THE DEBTS ON THE CONNEXIONAL PROPERTY
IN THE CIRCUIT
IS BEING SO SUCCESSFULLY CARRIED OUT,
THIS LITTLE BOOK
IS MOST RESPECTFULLY AND AFFECTIONATELY
DEDICATED.



PREFACE.



IT is peculiarly interesting to us who live more than a century from the period when Methodism was first introduced into Yorkshire, to look back and reflect upon the lives and labours of those single-hearted, holy, and zealous men of God, through whose instrumentality He wrought such wonders in the land. It is a most pleasing duty to aid in the least degree in snatching from under the descending cloud of Time any scraps of the early history of Methodism, which may be obtained either from old records, or from the memories of the few yet living, whose "fathers declared unto them the wonderful things that had been wrought in their day." To the readiness which these fathers and mothers in Israel showed to communicate what they could remember, the Author bears grateful testimony. The very mention of the names of the first preachers they saw and heard, and through whose instrumentality they were brought to God, would throw a glow of pleasantness over their aged countenances, and for a moment seem to annihilate the years that had rolled between. They would fancy themselves in the midst of those early and happy days, and with an eloquence peculiar to the tongue which speaks from the abundance of a full heart, would recount the wonders of Divine grace, speak of the piety, zeal,

and diligence of the early preachers, and of their persecutions and sufferings for Christ's sake.

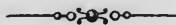
Most of those from whom the Author learnt the facts interwoven in the following sketch have passed away to their eternal reward. His work has been light, and he can lay but little claim to originality. To the late Messrs. C. T. Bainbridge, John Brown, and Thomas Skaife, of Easingwold; and to the late Mr. Robert Smith, of Coxwold, he was under special obligation.

He only further wishes to say that his little book has no pretensions to be considered a History of the Circuit, but simply a record of occasional facts and incidents which he thinks ought not to be forgotten.

J. R. *ookledge*

EASINGWOLD,
MAY 25TH, 1872.

INTRODUCTORY.



THE religious and moral condition of England at the close of the seventeenth and the commencement of the eighteenth centuries, is admitted by all who have studied the subject to have been at its lowest ebb. The often-quoted review of the venerable Burnet, Bishop of Salisbury, in his preface to his *Pastoral Care*, is a painful proof of this. He says,—“I am now (1713) in my seventieth year. I cannot speak long in the world, therefore I lay hold on the present time to give free vent to those sad thoughts that lie on my mind both day and night, and are the subject of many secret mournings.” He declares he “cannot look on, without the deepest concern, when he sees *the imminent ruin which hangs over the Church*, and this *ruin*,” he asserts, “threatens the whole Reformation. The outward state of things is black enough God knows, but that which heightens my fears rises chiefly from the inward state into which we are unhappily fallen.”

He describes the condition of the clergy in the following appalling words:—“Our ember-weeks are the burden and grief of my life. The much greater part of those who come to be ordained are ignorant to a degree not to be apprehended by those who are not obliged to know it. The easiest part of knowledge is that to which they are the greatest strangers,

I mean, the plainest part of the Scriptures,—which they say, in excuse for their ignorance, that their tutors in the Universities never mention the reading of to them, so that they can give no account, or at least a very imperfect one, of the contents even of the Gospels. Those who have read some few books yet never seem to have read the Scriptures. Many cannot give a tolerable account even of the Catechism itself, how short and plain soever.

“This does often tear my heart. The case is not much better in many who having got into orders, come for institution, and cannot make it appear that they have read the Scriptures, or any one good book, since they were ordained; so that the small measure of knowledge upon which they got into holy orders, not being improved, is in a way to be quite lost, and then they think it a great hardship, if they are told they must know the Scriptures and the body of divinity better, before they can be trusted with the care of souls. What are we like to grow to, when so gross an ignorance in the fundamentals of religion has spread itself so much among those who ought to teach others, and yet need that one should teach them the first principles of the oracles of God.”

Secker, Archbishop of Canterbury, says in the year before that which is commemorated as the original year of Methodism:—“In this we cannot be mistaken, that an open and professed disregard is become, through a variety of unhappy causes, the distinguishing character of the present age. Such are the dissoluteness and contempt of principle in the higher part of the world, and the profligacy, in-

temperance, and fearlessness of committing crimes in the lower, as must, if this torrent of impiety stop not, become absolutely fatal." He further asserts, that "Christianity is ridiculed and railed at with very little reserve, and the teachers of it without any at all." About this time, Butler, Bishop of Durham, published his unparalleled work on the *Analogy between Natural and Revealed Religion*. In his preface he gives a deplorable description of the religious world. He concurs with the preceding authorities in representing it in the very extremity of decline. "It has come to be taken for granted that Christianity is no longer a subject of inquiry, but that it is now at length discovered to be fictitious; and accordingly it is treated as if, in the present age, this was an agreed point among all persons of discernment, and nothing remained but to set it up as a principal subject for mirth and ridicule."

If these extracts give, as we sincerely believe they do, a correct idea of the state of religion in the Universities, amongst the clergy, and in the larger towns of our land, the rural districts were in a still worse condition; irreligion and superstition everywhere prevailed. The belief in witchcraft, which in some of the remoter country districts has not yet entirely passed away, was then universal. The principle *religious* luminary of whom we have any account in this vale of York was Lawrence Sterne, whose writings are a mixture of ribald burlesque and lewd humour, and who, whatever be the opinion as to the merit of these writings, is admitted by all to have been a discredit to his profession and a disgrace to

the Church of which he was a member. The parlour-table books of the age were the writings of Smollet and Fielding; while on the same table lay also the *Metamorphoses*, translated by the wits of the period, with Dryden at their head, dedicated to the first ladies of the court, embellished with illustrations which modern decency would hardly tolerate, and teeming with the sensual pruriency which pervades the polite writings of that and the preceding age. The infidel works of Hobbes, Tindal, Shaftesbury, and Chubb, were in full circulation, and were powerfully reinforced by the appearance of the greatest giants in the cause of speculative error which modern times have produced—Bolingbroke, Hume, and Gibbon; the first influential by his political eminence and political partizans, and by the adornment which the harmonious verse of Pope gave to his sentiments; the second, by all the arts of insinuation, and by a style which, says Sir J. Mackintosh, “was more lively, more easy, more ingratiating, and if the word may be so applied, more amusing than that of any other metaphysical writer;” and the last, by weaving his perverse opinions into one of the greatest works of the human intellect, “a production as corrupt in its sentiments as it is magnificent in its execution.” In France, Voltaire and Rousseau had decked with all the attractions of eloquence and poetry, humour and satire, the corrupt doctrines of the day; until they swept, like a sirocco, in tempest over the nation; withering not only the sentiments of religion, but the instincts of humanity; and subverting at last in common ruin the altar, the throne, and the sacred protections of domestic life.

This general decline had reached its extremity when Wesley and his coadjutors appeared. "It was," to use his own words, "just at this time, when we wanted little of filling up the measure of our iniquities, that two or three clergymen of the Church of England began vehemently to call sinners to repentance." His own testimony to the irreligion of the time is truly appalling. "What," he asks, "is the present characteristic of the English nation? It is ungodliness. This is our universal, our constant, our peculiar character. A total ignorance of God is almost universal amongst us. The exceptions are exceedingly few, both among the learned and unlearned. High and low are as ignorant of the Creator of the world as Mohammedans or Pagans." The reception which Methodism met with when ushered into the world was a very hostile one. Like every other reformation, it was violently opposed. Clergymen excluded the Methodists from their pulpits, declaimed against them from the sacred desk, and both in public and in private ridiculed and condemned them. Magistrates arraigned them, and sometimes imprisoned them. Mobs were encouraged to insult and stone them. They were waylaid and beaten in their travels; interrupted, endangered, and injured when preaching. But there was no frightening men "full of the Holy Ghost and of faith;" and there was no conquering men armed with the love of Christ. "Persecuted at one city, they would flee to another," and repeat the same work of preaching "Jesus and the Resurrection."

We feel that we do not hazard much when we say that, in the group of its earliest characters we

meet with men the most remarkable in their respective spheres since the early days of Christianity. The legislative power of Wesley is seen in the whole economical system of Methodism,—a system which, while it fixes itself to the smallest locality with the utmost detail and tenacity, is sufficiently general in its provision to reach the ends of the world, and still maintain its unity of spirit and discipline. While Wesley was employing his wonderful power in constructing and establishing the economy of Methodism, Whitefield was raising for it the popular sympathies by his eloquence, and preparing especially other sects for the influence which time has shown it was destined to exert upon them ; Charles Wesley was embodying its tenets and spirit in verse, and preparing for its future hundreds of thousands an unrivalled psalmody ; Fletcher was defending with a battle-axe which nothing could withstand its theology, and vindicating it as much by his spirit as his logic ; Coke, one of its most devoted and self-denying sons, was developing its plans of foreign conquest ; Asbury, the great pioneer Bishop of American revivals, was applying its energies to the new circumstances of that hemisphere ; Clarke and Benson, the former amongst the most learned and the latter one of the most practical of modern expositors, were fortifying it firmly on the foundation of Scripture. These men differed widely in their external circumstances and qualifications—as widely perhaps as Peter the fisherman of Galilee and Saul the pupil of Gamaliel ; but whether it were John Nelson, the unlettered but devoted Yorkshire stonemason, or Gideon Ouseley, the classically-educated but not less

devoted Irish gentleman, they all preached the same doctrines, and the invariable characteristics of their preaching were *sincerity, simplicity, and fervour. They believed, and therefore they spake as they did. They were themselves affected with the truths they uttered,* and their hearers could not long remain unaffected. This was the grand secret of their great success.

In order that we may see how great has been that success, we will close this already too long introductory chapter with some statistics showing the present position of the Societies throughout the world. The Rev. L. Tyerman, in his *Life of Mr. Wesley* published last year, says, "The Methodist or parent Conference employs in Great Britain and Ireland 1,782 regular Ministers. Besides these there were, in 1864, in England only, 11,804 lay-preachers, preaching 8,754 sermons every Sabbath day. In the same year, the number of preaching-places in England only was 6,718, and the number of sermons preached weekly, by Ministers and lay-preachers combined, was 13,852. To these must be added the lay-preachers, preaching-places, &c., in Wales, Scotland, Ireland, Shetland, and the Channel Islands. The number of church members in Great Britain and Ireland is 365,285, with 21,223 on trial; and calculating that the hearers are three times as numerous as the Church members, there are considerably more than a million persons in the United Kingdom who are attendants upon the religious services of the *parent* Conference of the people called Methodists. During the ten years from 1859 to 1868 inclusive, there was raised for the support of the Foreign

Missions of the Connexion £1,408,235 ; and, if to this there be added the amount of the Jubilee Fund, we find more than a million and a half sterling contributed during the decade for the sustenance and extension of Methodist work in foreign lands. The Missionary Committee employ 3,798 paid agents ; besides these there are about 20,000 agents of the Society (as Local-preachers, &c.), who are rendering important service gratuitously ; while the number of Church members is 154,187, and the number of attendants upon the religious services more than half a million.

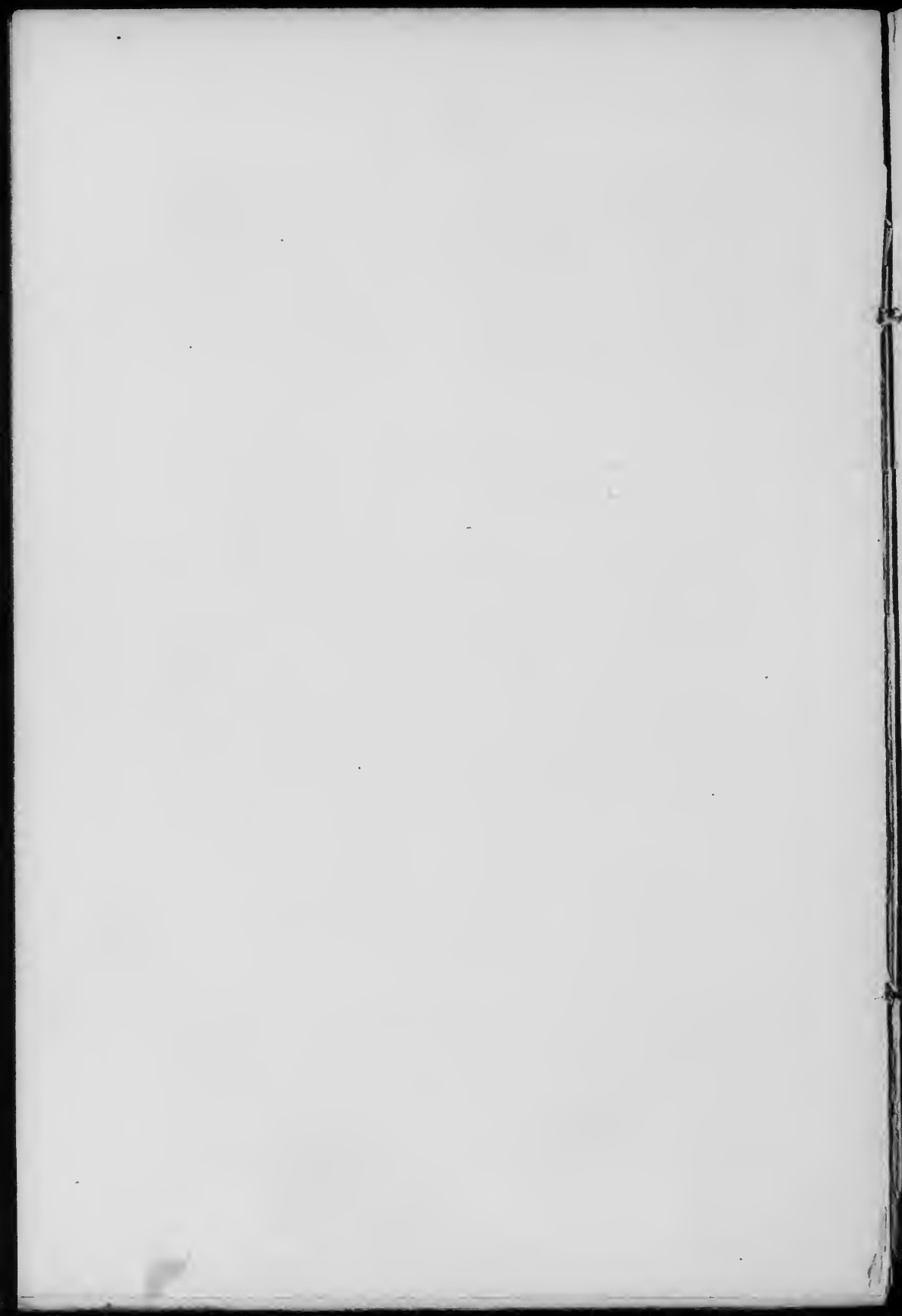
These statistics are significant of great facts. At a moderate computation there are at least two millions of persons worshipping in the chapels, schools, &c., of the original body of the people called Methodists.

The same authority, Mr. Tyerman, partly from official returns, and partly from estimated numbers, gives the following as the total number of Church members, &c., in the various Methodist bodies throughout the world.

Church Members	.	.	.	.	2,901,202
Sunday Scholars	.	.	.	.	3,400,373
Hearers only	.	.	.	.	5,802,404
Total	.	.	.	.	<u>12,103,979</u>

“Let the reader think,” he says, “of twelve millions of people at present enjoying the benefits of Methodist instruction ; let him think of Methodism’s 21,875 ordained Ministers, and of its tens of thousands of lay-preachers ; let him think of millions of young people in its schools, and of its Missionary

agents almost all the wide world over ; let him think of its incalculable influence upon other Churches, and of the *unsectarian* institutions to which it has given rise ; and then let him say whether the bold suggestion already made is not strictly true, viz., that ' Methodism is the greatest fact in the history of the Church of Christ.' ”



MEMORIALS OF EARLY METHODISM.

EASINGWOLD.

THE earliest introduction of Methodism into the town and immediate neighbourhood of Easingwold is left without record. In all probability, the first Methodist sermon preached in the town was by John Nelson when passing through in the hands of a press-gang. This remarkable man was one of the earliest converts to Methodism, and after pursuing his calling for some time in London came back into Yorkshire. He soon began to gather his neighbours around him to declare how great things the Lord had done for him. His labours then extended to the villages around. Opposition was soon aroused, and as no other means could be found to silence him, he was seized by the press-gang in the month of July, 1744. He was taken a prisoner to York; but there he was faithful to his work, and in that city God had blessed his labours. When he was about to leave he tells us, "Many of the people came and said 'We are sorry you are going so soon from York, but if you get your liberty, we hope both you and Mr. Wesley will come, for we have need of such plain dealing; and thousands in this

city would be glad to hear. You see what a populous and wicked place it is. Pray do not forget us, but think of us, when you see us not. We expected some of you two or three years ago, but you had no regard for our souls till God brought you by force. Surely you were not sold hither, but sent for our good, therefore forget us not.'”

“On Thursday morning we stood two hours in the street before we set out of town. We marched to Easingwold that day, and when we were drawn up in the street, the people perceived me to be the Methodist Preacher they had read of in the newspapers. They told one another, and flocked about me as if the soldiers had brought a monster into the town.

“When we had stayed near an hour in the street, I and five others were billeted at one house, where the people were so poor they had not six seats for us to sit on nor any beds. So we came back to the officers’ quarters and they ordered four of us to another house.

“God gave me to speak plainly to them, and several of their neighbours who came to see the Methodists. And then they said ‘If this be Methodist doctrine, we pray God we may have it preached in this town, for hundreds would be glad to hear you.’

“In the evening the head man of the town came in. He was a professed Papist, but was a moral, honest man, and bore a good character in his neighbourhood. He asked me many questions, and God enabled me to answer him to his satisfaction. Indeed I never saw a man of rank so teachable and humble. His gold lace did not make him above listening to the Gospel. He seemed a man of sound reason, as

well as liberal education. I spoke near an hour to prove the doctrine of Justification by Faith, and that both from the Old and New Testament. I showed the fruits of that justifying faith, and the necessity of every man's having it, that he may escape the damnation of hell. The word had such an effect upon him, that his eyes betrayed the tenderness of his heart; and when I ended he said, "I think no man in his senses would dare to hinder you from instructing sinners in the way of salvation. For my own part, I shall be glad to see you at liberty, and if you get clear of these men, and come again this way, I would have you call on me.

"I was amazed to find such a man among the Papists, having met with very few either teachers or hearers of our own Church but what hold Papist principles ten times stronger than this man who calls himself a Papist. When he went away, he forced two shillings into my hand, which I would have returned, telling him I received no money and needed none; but he would not take it again, saying he could afford it and I might have occasion for them on my journey. O God be merciful to him that gives a cup of cold water to Thy servant."

Two years after this, viz., in 1746, York was appointed one of the Circuits of Methodism, though it would appear to have been soon absorbed into perhaps a larger district, as it was again constituted a Circuit in 1763. It was probably after this second appointment of preachers to York that a Society was formed in Easingwold. The first preaching is said to have been in a house about a mile from the town on the Stillington Road, called Blayd's House,

at present occupied by Mrs. Taylor. The persons who first invited the preachers to Easingwold were John Skaife, (who at that time filled the office of Parish Clerk, and who appears to have been a man, who, in intelligence, was considerably in advance of the period;) and his brother-in-law, who, singular to say, was the Sexton of the parish. Under the fostering care of these officials of the National Church, the first Methodist Preachers made their regular periodical visits to Easingwold, as in 1768 we find the Society sending a contribution of six shillings to the York Quarterly Meeting. The preaching was continued at Blayd's house for about a year. Only a few attended, but to some of these the Gospel proved the power of God unto salvation. And amongst the first of these was John Skaife and his wife. On embracing the truth they opened their house in the town for preaching. The opposition to Methodism which was so prevalent almost everywhere on its first introduction had not been previously manifested; but now, on entering the town, this opposition was thoroughly aroused. Not only were the preachers and people hooted when going to and from the services, but windows were broken, pitchforks and other weapons were freely used. On one occasion a regularly organized attack was made on the house where they were assembled. Not only were the windows broken, but the doors shivered to pieces, and the people compelled to flee from an infuriated mob. Redress was sought in vain from the magistrates around. The only answer John Skaife and his friends received was, "Turn them out, turn them out; we want no Methodists here." Having

sought aid from those in authority in vain, with great perseverance they sought from more favourable magistrates at a distance this help. They went to Mr. Bell at Thirsk, and laid their case before him. With great promptitude, he issued warrants for the arrest of some of those who had been the ringleaders in the riot; and on their being brought before him, having heard the case, he severely censured them for having disturbed the worshippers, requiring them to pay all expenses incurred in repairing John Skaife's house, requiring the constable to see the work properly done, and told them in conclusion that he would file the warrant for twelvemonths; and that if any of them disturbed John Skaife or his friends while peaceably worshipping God, if brought before him he would punish them severely. After this we have no account of any serious disturbance; and, as in other places, so here I suppose, this active opposition, on being brought face to face with the law firmly administered, speedily ceased.

In the city of York, there had been raised up under the labours of the early Methodists, two or three remarkable men by whose labours as Local-preachers the work was greatly extended in the towns and villages around. One of the most remarkable of these was Richard Burdsall who was born on the 14th March, 1735, at Kirby, in the parish of Kirkby Onslow, in Yorkshire. From early life he was often the subject of deep religious impressions; but these did not keep him from sin. When he attained manhood, and was about twenty-six years of age, he fully gave his heart to God, and became one of the most laborious and useful of the lay preachers of early

Methodism. Scarcely any man was better known amongst the Methodist congregations in the North and West Ridings of the county of York, for the last quarter of the eighteenth and the first quarter of the nineteenth centuries, than "Dicky Burdsall," and no man perhaps more highly esteemed. In his memoir writtten by himself, he gives the following review of his life :—"I am now," he says, "December, 1822, in my eighty-eighth year ; and find that I have as much need of looking unto Jesus as I ever had, seeing that Satan and sin are always near. On the 23rd of May, 1762, the Lord set my soul at liberty ; and about the Christmas following, he not only gave me to see that the blood of Jesus *could*, but to feel that it *did* cleanse from all sin. Ever since the year 1762, I have been joined with the people called Methodists ; and had I my time to live over again, I would in no wise be disunited from them ; for there is no sect or body of people that I have ever met with, that has privileges and discipline comparable to those enjoyed by this despised people. Unto what sect of Christians can you go to enjoy what you profess to believe is implied in the communion of saints ? And what sect of Christians is it that has ever vied with this in zeal to carry the sound of the Saviour's name into a blind world. So fully am I assured that the doctrines and discipline of the Methodists are the very doctrines and discipline of the Gospel, that I have not only accounted it my privilege to enjoy them, but my duty to recommend them ; and it is on this ground only that I have allowed myself to be employed by them as a Leader and Local-preacher for over sixty years. I do

not say that all who are called Methodists are Christians, any more than that all were Israel who were called Israel; but all who live and walk in the spirit of Christ, are Christians. In this spirit may I live and walk to the end of my pilgrimage." For a great number of years Mr. Burdsall visited Easingwold three or four times or oftener in the year. It is said that in the early days of Methodism in the town, he was attacked by a mob armed with pitchforks, and only escaped serious injury by the flight of his horse. He records that he was present when Mr. Wesley preached, on the invitation of the incumbent, in St. Saviour's Church, York, upon the eight beatitudes; on which occasion Mr. W. remarked on the words "Blessed are they who are persecuted for righteousness, sake, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven,"—"Perhaps no man in England knows more of what this means than I do."

Another of these early lay evangelists was born in the Easingwold Circuit,—Robert Spence, the son of a Blacksmith at Stillington, who died when his son was only sixteen months old. After being at a dame's school in the village, he began life by undertaking the work of driving the plough for the small sum of twopence per day. By diligence and industry he became one of the leading and most highly respected tradesmen in the city of York. In early manhood he gave his heart to God, and was for fifty-seven years a Local-preacher; a man of a holy, and blameless life, whose uprightness and integrity were never impeached, and whose memory is affectionately cherished by those yet remaining who knew him. Amongst others less known but perhaps

not less devoted to their work were Wilkinson, of Warthill, a son of Thunder Amos, Pearse, Wright, and others ; through whose fostering care the infant church increased. While the Society held its meetings in the house of John Skaife, they were visited by the venerable founder of Methodism, Mr. Wesley, who preached to them in their humble meeting-place ; and in the course of a year or two, in passing through the town, Mr. Wesley again preached, but this time in the open air under the shade of a sturdy oak, in a garden in Uppleby, on "The King's business requires haste." An old man has often told the author that he heard Mr. Wesley on this occasion, and that after he had finished the people pelted him with sods, &c., the reward which he too often received for his self-denying and earnest efforts to do them good. In course of time their meeting-place became too small, and for some time it seems to have weighed heavily upon the mind of the Society. They needed a chapel but had not the means to build one, or any hope of procuring these means. Their only resource was to pray for God's guidance and help in the matter. In 1784, the Rev. Alexander Mather was appointed a second time to the York Circuit. As he had probably been connected with the Society in its infancy, he was consulted by the friends, and urgently recommended them to build a chapel, and himself gave the first subscription of a guinea. After some difficulty a site was procured, and a chapel built, in which Mr. Wesley preached on May 8th, 1786. He says :—"I preached in the new house at Easingwold at noon, and in the evening at Thirsk."

About this time, or a little before, there began

to preach amongst the Methodists at Easingwold, one who was led to do so by a somewhat remarkable Providence. John Crosby, who was at this time a farm servant, was born at Whitby, in 1755. He had been converted under the preaching of a clergyman at Pickering, but had joined the Methodists. He was now living as farm servant near Easingwold, with Mrs. Stillingfleet, and on one Sabbath morning after returning from church Mrs. S. said to him, "John, you must explain the Lord's prayer in the family to-night." This surprised him, and he began to remonstrate; but finding that was of no use, she continuing to insist upon it, he retired to his room, got his Bible, meditated on the selected portion, and earnestly implored the Divine assistance. When the time came, he, in much fear, made the attempt, and God followed it with extraordinary marks of approbation. Mrs. S. found peace with God whilst he was speaking. A son and daughter, and the servant maid, were convinced of sin. After prayer he withdrew to his room, not aware of the success which had attended his trembling effort. Mrs. S. and her son followed him, the son being in great distress. They engaged in prayer on his behalf, and in a short time God spoke peace to his soul. When they rose from their knees rejoicing, the daughter, who had followed them unperceived, remained pleading with God for herself; they again engaged in prayer and she obtained a sense of pardon. They then went down stairs, and found the servant-maid in distress; again they pleaded with God till she obtained the same blessedness by believing. Several days after this interesting evening, the little girl who had experi-

enced the pardon of her sins was found burning her playthings. Her mother told her not to burn them, for though she would use them no more, yet they might be sold, and so be the means of doing some good ; to which the child made this striking answer, "So Saul thought, when he spared the best of the sheep and oxen to sacrifice to God ; but you know, mother, Samuel condemned him for not having destroyed them all."

Mr. Crosby laboured in the Lord's vineyard as an itinerant preacher twenty-eight years, travelling in some of the best Circuits in the Connexion, and maintained an unblemished and pious character through the whole of his ministerial course. During the later years of his life, he was a man of various afflictions, and at times his sufferings were severe in the extreme. He professed entire sanctification many years, and he gave indubitable evidence of the justness of his profession by exemplary patience under his heavy afflictions, by uniform and habitual devotedness to God, and by a steady and persevering exemplification of all the social and Christian graces.

Until the close of the eighteenth century, Easingwold formed part of the York Circuit, which originally embraced a very extensive district of country. When in 1746 it was first formed a Circuit, there were only seven in the Connexion. York Circuit included Yorkshire and the five adjacent counties of Cheshire, Lancashire, Derbyshire, Nottinghamshire, and Lincolnshire. What was at this time the York Circuit, has now, in 1872, not less than twelve Districts, subdivided into more than two hundred Circuits.

Of course, in a large Circuit with perhaps not more than three or four preachers, they had a very large amount of travelling, and their visits to any given place in their round would be very few. Thomas Oliver tells us, in 1760, he went into the York Circuit. "At that time I was thought to be in the last stage of a consumption, and as I had about three hundred miles to ride every six weeks, and about sixty Societies to take care of, few thought I should be able to go once round. But I said, 'I am determined to go as far as I can, and when I can go no further then I will turn back.' Accordingly I entered upon my work, which was enough to try the strongest constitution. By the time I had got about half way round, I found that violent labour had got me a little appetite, yea, and caused me to sleep better, so that I began to gather flesh before I got to the end of my circuit."

Towards the close of the century this large Circuit had been greatly reduced in its dimensions, and in 1800 Easingwold was made the head of a Circuit, the Revs. Thomas Dixon and James Needham being the first ministers. The number of places originally included in it was twenty-two, consisting of Easingwold, Stillington, Farlington, Flaxton, Huby, Sheriff Hutton, Gilling, Helmsley, Hawnby, Cold Kirby, Bilsdale, Harum, Ampleforth, Kilburn, Husthwaite, Thormanby, Craike, Tollerton, New Monkton, Newton, Alne, Raskelf. A copy of one of the early balance sheets of the Circuit is here given, in order that the friends may see how great is the contrast between income and expenditure then and now.

1801.	STEWARDS.	Dr.
Jan. 1. Place.	No. of Members.	£ s. d.
Easingwold . . .	79 . . .	3 3 0
Stillington . . .	11 . . .	0 10 6
Farlington . . .	19 . . .	0 13 0
Flaxton . . .	9 . . .	0 12 0
Craike . . .	20 . . .	0 15 0
Huby . . .	40 . . .	1 1 0
Sheriff Hutton . . .	25 . . .	1 1 0
Gilling . . .	13 . . .	0 7 0
Helmsley . . .	36 . . .	1 2 0
Cold Kirby . . .	16 . . .	0 13 0
Hawnby . . .	28 . . .	1 1 0
Bilsdale . . .	13 . . .	0 13 6
Harum . . .	31 . . .	1 1 0
Ampleforth . . .	7 . . .	0 5 0
Kilburn . . .	17 . . .	0 13 6
Hustwaite . . .	9 . . .	0 7 0
Thormanby . . .	10 . . .	0 11 6
Tollerton . . .	30 . . .	0 19 0
New Monkton . . .	10 . . .	0 8 0
Newton . . .	5 . . .	0 6 0
Alne . . .	11 . . .	0 14 0
Raskelf . . .	12 . . .	0 10 6
		<u>£17 7 6</u>

1801.	STEWARDS.	Cr.
		£ s. d.
Mr. Dixon's Quarterage . . .		4 0 0
Mr. Needham's Quarterage . . .		4 0 0
Servant . . .		1 10 0
Washing . . .		0 16 0
Turnpikes and Ferry boats . . .		0 5 0
Letters . . .		0 4 6
House bill . . .		0 2 9
Horses Shoeing . . .		0 8 10
Coals . . .		1 16 0
Candles . . .		0 4 9
House Rent . . .		2 0 0
Sesses . . .		0 4 7½
An Account Book for Circuit . . .		0 5 6
Class Papers and Tickets . . .		0 8 0
Interest for Furniture . . .		0 10 3
Stable bill . . .		0 10 3½
Paid towards discharging debt . . .		0 1 3
		<u>£17 7 6</u>

The total amount collected in the Circuit during the year for the Connexional Funds, was—Yearly Collection, £10 6s 5d.; Kingswood Schools, £8 19s. 7d.; Superannuated Preachers' Fund, £4 17s. 0d.; West India Missions, £4 12s. 9 $\frac{3}{4}$ d. The only places at this time contributing to the Missions being, Easingwold, £1 2s. 7 $\frac{1}{4}$ d.; Harum, 16s. 10 $\frac{1}{2}$ d.; Huby, 13s. 6d.; Sheriff Hutton, £1 0s. 0d., and Tollerton, 14s. 10d. The places originally forming the Circuit now contribute to the Mission Funds between £500 and £600 per annum. The visits of Dr. Coke to the Circuit in making his early collections for the Missions were well remembered by the persons referred to in the preface. This remarkable man, one of the most interesting characters in the early history of the Methodistic movement, was born at Brecon, in Wales, in 1747, of wealthy parents. This wealth, when it came to him, he spent in sending the Gospel to his fellow men. His stature was low, but his soul was as vast as ever dwelt in human frame. He could not find in England sufficient room for his energies, but was perpetually contriving new measures for extending in foreign countries the cause he had so providentially embraced. He was emphatically the Foreign Minister of Methodism. He founded the Negro Missions in the West Indies, and at his own expense crossed the Atlantic eighteen times in furtherance of Mission work. Until his death he had charge of the Methodist Missions throughout the world. He preached for them, and begged for them from door to door in most of the Circuits in the kingdom; and the interest excited by this worthy man during his visits to the Easingwold

Circuit, in the early part of its history, beyond doubt contributed much to develope that interest in, and love for Mission work, which has ever been one of its leading characteristics.

We are not told in the old Circuit book, which is still preserved, who were the first Circuit Stewards, but in June, 1802, is the entry :—"The Circuit Stewards for 1802 are Christopher Smith, the scribe who keeps the book, and George Walker, casher." The writer can learn nothing beyond the record of Christopher Smith and George Walker ; but the "scribe" kept his books with great neatness, and the "casher" did what many Circuit-stewards with much larger means have failed to do since,—kept the Circuit out of debt. The means by which he was able to do this with the small income he had at command is not always clear ; but it seems when the Quarterage fell short, the Preachers had to suffer. We can scarcely conceive at the present day, how it was possible that with an income of £18 per Quarter, the expenses of two preachers, including their horse and the household expenses, could be met : nevertheless such was the case for the first four years. In 1804, on the Rev. Philip Hardcastle's appointment to the Circuit, £3 per quarter additional was paid to his wife, making the income of man and wife £28 a year ; the board of the Preacher was of course in addition to this. The payment to the wife being in lieu of board.

Two of the most active, zealous, and devoted members of the Society in Easingwold at this period, were William Smith and John Skaife. The former carried on the occupation of a staymaker, but was a

very able and laborious Local-preacher, and was the means not only of introducing, but of greatly building up Methodism in many of the villages around. He was instrumental in the conversion of the Rev. Thomas Vasey, who became an exemplary and useful Minister in the Connexion.

John Skaife was the grandson and namesake of him who first introduced the preachers to Easingwold, and died in 1838 in the 73rd year of his age,—one of the oldest members of the Society, having united himself to it in 1784. On being convinced of sin under the preaching of the Rev. Alexander Mather, he retired into his grandfather's stable, and cried "Lord what wouldst thou have me to do." He united with the Methodist Society, at that time but few in number, with fear and trembling, lest he should prove unfaithful. He had the honour to bear the reproach attached to Methodism in its rise in the town and neighbourhood; and after he began to preach, he frequently accompanied the late Richard Burdsall in his visits to the different villages, and between them they would preach five or six times on a Sabbath. Their plan was to commence singing as they entered into a village, and continue doing so until people came together; when this was done, then one of them addressed the congregation. He was a Class-leader for upwards of fifty years, and a highly respected Local-preacher, forty. He used frequently to say, "I have viewed Methodism in three generations, and the more I know of it the more I admire it." In his deportment in the world, he was a man of strict integrity and punctuality. He died as he had lived, a faithful and true Christian, on the 20th

day of November, 1838. He was interred in the chapel-yard at Easingwold, the only interment that has taken place there, and where a monument now stands, erected to his memory by the Local-preachers in the Circuit.

Connected with these early Societies in the Circuit there were of "godly women not a few." One only can we notice here, Mrs. Driffeld, whose memoir "A Christian of fourscore," was written by Mrs. Drewett. Tenderly and delicately brought up, she became in early life the subject of deep religious impressions, and cast in her lot amongst the despised Methodists. Through a life extended to eighty-three years, she honoured the profession she made. Her clear and comprehensive views on religion, her matured experience, and her blameless and holy life, were brought to a close by a peaceful and happy death after a union of some sixty years with the Church of Christ.

During the first fifteen years of the present century the Society continued to make steady progress. They were favoured, in 1805, with the ministry of the Rev. David McNicoll, then quite a young man, just entering on the English work. He had spent two years of his life under peculiarly favourable circumstances in Edinburgh and Glasgow. In the former he enjoyed special advantages from the high religious character and intelligence of the members of the Methodist Society. The year Mr. McNicoll spent there, had a decided influence on his future life and character. God had given him a taste and capacity for searching out and intermeddling with all knowledge, and here his natural curiosity was admirably

suited and excited, all his dormant but gigantic powers roused. He received in that happy year, a deeper baptism of the Holy Ghost, and his ministry was attended by a divine unction. He came to Easingwold and laboured with great acceptability and usefulness for a year, and went to Conference in order to be received into full connexion, pledging himself if possible to return. His trial sermon was one of such uncommon ability that Adam Clarke asked for his appointment to London as his colleague. He resided there in Clarke's own house, and received his aid in study and ministerial preparation. He became one of the most popular and effective preachers in the denomination; and for about thirty-four years honoured and promoted it by his pre-eminent talents. He died somewhat suddenly in 1836.

Another somewhat remarkable man was stationed in the Circuit 1809-10. The Rev. Samuel Bardsley, celebrated not so much for great talent as for his holiness and simplicity. "On his heart," say his brethren in their Minutes, "was deeply engraven the law of kindness, and his evenness and sweetness of temper were proverbial. From divine love, which not only reigned in but filled his soul, flowed his unfeigned love of the brethren and of the whole family of mankind. He lived to be the father of the Connexion, and at the close of the Leeds Conference of 1818, he and his old companion Francis Wrigley, who lived in his turn to be the oldest Preacher in the Conference, set out to travel together toward their Circuits, arriving at a country inn, where they proposed remaining for the night. Bardsley felt

ill; his friend assisted him toward his bed-room. Bardsley's strength failed, and he sat down on the topmost step of the stairs, threw his arm round Wrigley's neck, saying "My dear, I must die," and was not, for God took him.

In 1815, the present chapel was erected, the building of thirty years before having become insufficient for the wants of the congregation. The original cost of the present erection was £970 13s. 7½d. The *faith* of the Society had now become strong, as they erected the chapel at the cost above stated, and left not less than £780 of debt on the new erection; which, with £70 of debt remaining on the old trust, made a total of £850 for which the trustees were liable. The money raised on account of the new building amounted to £216 2s. 10¾d. and was composed of the following items. Collections, £40 2s. 7¾d.; Class money, £24 3s. 5d.; Gallery seats for half a year, £24 3s. 5d.; Subscriptions, £98 12s. 6d. The original trustees of the new chapel were John Skaife, Thomas Skaife, Charles Thomas Bainbridge, William Gill, and Thomas Driffeld, of Easingwold; Robert Shephard, of Aldwark; John Cattle, of Youlton Lodge; John Burnitt and Luke Plummer, of Thormanby; and William Smith, of Wildon Grange. The chapel was opened in 1816, by the Revs. Miles Martindale and David McNicoll.

In 1819-20, under the ministry of the Revs. John Sedgwick and J. P. Haswell, one of those gracious seasons of revival was vouchsafed to the Circuit. In one year the members in Society were increased from 750 to 875; several who for the last half cen-

ture have done the work of the Church in the Circuit, as Leaders and Local-preachers, were the fruits of that revival. Mr. Sedgwick died in 1850. Mr. Haswell, (then in the strength of early manhood), died at Newcastle in 1870. His earnest, evangelical, and useful preaching, his kind disposition, wise counsels, tender sympathy, and fervent prayers, are still remembered by some who were the fruits of his ministry; whilst many who were brought to God in that revival have reached the better land.

Amongst the notable labourers in Methodism at this period of its history were two whose occasional visits to the Circuit were very highly valued, William Dawson and Samuel Hick. The former was known throughout the Methodist world as much by his piety and usefulness as by his eccentricities. He was one of the best examples of Yorkshire Methodist character. A farmer, Local-preacher, and general Missionary advocate; shrewd, with natural insight; intelligent, without much education; apt of speech, eccentric, but equally relevant in thought; given to allegory and the oddest illustrations of his discourses; with an irrepressible but kindly humour, strong in his manhood, tender and gentle as womanhood, simple and confiding as childhood, apostolic in his faith and life, a poetic orator in rustic guise—such was William Dawson. “At his funeral, the streets of Leeds, through which he was borne, presented for the space of a mile and half, one congregated mass of people.” It was the spontaneous tribute of the grateful people who had for years been benefitted by his rare talents and unblemished example. Their Methodist ancestors had borne brave

John Nelson to the tomb in a similar manner, in the early day of trial; the old battle field over which they now bore Dawson to his family bury-place was waving with such a moral harvest as Methodism had produced nowhere else in the world.

Not less eccentric, though different in his eccentricities, was "Sammy Hick, the village blacksmith," a true apostle of the people. He was born at Aberford, on September 20th, 1758, and was one of thirteen children that had to be reared by the "hand labour," to employ an expression of his own, of poor but industrious parents. When in his eighteenth year, he went over to the York Whit-Monday fair, and whilst there he heard Richard Burdsall preach; and though he returned unchanged by Divine grace, he had formed a strong attachment to the man, and often afterwards went many miles to hear him preach. A little while after he heard Mr. Wesley preach in the old chapel at Leeds. "On hearing Mr. W. he emphatically received his sight." His heart was truly given to God, and henceforth he only lived to serve Him. He became an assiduous visitor of the sick, he emptied his pockets with a sort of hilarious delight for the poor, and denied himself severely in order to help them; he made preaching excursions in all directions. Like his friend William Dawson, he soon became a popular Missionary orator. His genial, happy spirit of piety, and his incessant travels and preaching, kept Yorkshire astir with interest; and we cannot wonder that Methodism took, during these years, such incessant hold of our county and has ever since had here its most fruitful harvests. Its great men, Clarke

Watson, Bunting, and Newton, found their best receptions, their greatest ovations, in this county ; but the paramount heroes of Yorkshire Methodism among the masses were now Samuel Hick and William Dawson ; and these men, by their self-denying charities, as well as by their singular eloquence, taught the Yorkshire Methodists those lessons of liberality to the Church which have made the county pre-eminent for contributions to the Missionary cause. New chapels were rising in all directions, and old ones were renewed. "The Village Blacksmith," and "The Yorkshire Farmer," were the favourite men to "open" them. Thousands of the people flocked to hear them on these occasions, and bore away instructions not only suited to their humble capacity, but powerful on their lives. Hick gave up his business entirely, in order that he might go about doing good as a volunteer home-missionary, bearing the word of God, so attractively exemplified in his own happy spirit, into the cottages of peasants and the homes of artizans ; giving animation to their prayer meetings, turning lovefeasts into spiritual jubilees, gathering congregations of thousands on the Sabbaths, opening new and collecting for embarrassed chapels, and thus building up Methodism in a manner that few other men of his day could equal.

The gracious revival of 1819-20, of which we have spoken, appears to have been followed by a period of stagnation and depression. The numbers were maintained, but the Society suffered from considerable financial difficulties ; with an increased outlay, there does not appear to have been any

development of increased liberality. A Circuit debt was of course the result. In 1827, a special collection was made throughout the Circuit, in order to remove it, realizing the sum of £26 12s. 6d. After this, in October of that year, the Circuit book has this entry "Borrowed of Mr. Bainbridge £50, for payment of Circuit debt." In 1830, the debt having again increased, another special appeal was made to the friends in the Circuit for help, realizing in this instance a larger amount. With a view of showing who were the principal supporters of Methodism in the Circuit at that time, the list is here given entire.

<i>Easingwold.*</i>		£ s. d.	
	£ s. d.	Mr. Wardman .	0 3 0
Mr. Bainbridge .	2 10 0	Public Collection .	0 5 0
Mr. Barugh .	1 5 0	<i>Sheriff Hutton.</i>	
Mr. Dixon .	1 10 0	Mr. Cordukes .	2 0 0
Mr. Wade .	0 10 0	Mr. Lee .	1 10 0
Mr. Oliver .	0 10 0	Mr. Ware .	1 0 0
Mr. Millington .	0 10 0	Two friends .	2 0 0
Mr. Leavers .	0 10 0	Mr. G. Smailes .	0 10 0
Mr. Seavers .	0 10 0	Mr. T. Cattle .	0 10 0
Mr. W. Bland .	0 5 0	Mr. Dennison .	0 10 0
Mr. Todd .	0 5 0	Mr. Crispin .	0 5 0
Mr. John Skaife .	0 5 0	Mr. Roccliffe .	0 5 0
Mr. Dodd .	0 5 0	Mr. Cook .	0 5 0
Mr. Appleby .	0 5 0	Mr. Sagg .	0 2 6
Mrs. Bolton .	0 2 0	Mr. R. Atlay .	0 2 6
John Brown .	0 1 0	Mr. Martin .	0 2 6
Mr. Peacock .	0 2 6	Friends at Lilling .	0 18 0
Mr. Barker .	0 5 0	<i>Stillington.</i>	
Mr. Braithwaite .	0 10 0	Mr. Barker .	1 0 0
A Friend .	0 10 0	Mr. Farrar, Sen. .	1 0 0
Public Collection .	2 13 2	Mr. Farrar, Jun. .	1 0 0
<i>Farlington.</i>		Mrs. Walker .	1 0 0
Mr. Jackson .	0 5 0	Mrs. Wiley .	0 1 0
Mr. Bean .	0 5 0	<i>Alne.</i>	
Mr. Rooke .	0 5 0	Mr. Shepherd .	2 0 0

	£	s.	d.
Mrs. Matterson . . .	0	10	0
Mrs. Wetherill . . .	0	5	0
Mrs. Weddell . . .	0	5	0
Mr. Hopwood . . .	0	2	6
Collection . . .	0	15	0

Aldwark.

Mr. Swales . . .	0	10	0
Mr. Coates . . .	0	5	0

Tollerton.

Mr. Leak . . .	1	0	0
Mr. Fawcett, Sen. . .	0	10	0
Mr. Fawcett, Jun. . .	0	10	0
Small sums . . .	0	2	6
Collection . . .	0	4	8

Newton.

Mr. John Hawkins . . .	1	10	0
Mr. W. Hawkins . . .	1	0	0
Mrs. Sotheron . . .	0	10	0
Collection . . .	0	7	0

Thornton.

Mr. Wales . . .	1	0	0
Mr. Homer . . .	0	10	0

Sutton.

Mr. T. Barker . . .	1	0	0
Mr. Stanbridge . . .	0	5	0
Mr. Shepherd . . .	0	5	0
Small Sums . . .	0	8	0

Huby.

Anonymous . . .	0	10	0
A Friend . . .	0	5	0
Collections . . .	0	10	8

Kilburn.

Mr. Smith . . .	1	0	0
Mr. John Smith . . .	1	0	0
Mr. William Smith . . .	1	0	0
Small Sums . . .	0	8	6

Ampleforth.

Small Sums . . .	0	10	0
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£ s. d.

Newton Grange.

Mr. J. Seymour . . .	1	0	0
Mr. E. Seymour . . .	0	10	0

Bilsdale.

Mr. Chapman . . .	0	10	0
Mr. Wood . . .	0	10	0
Thirkleby . . .	0	6	0

Husthwaite.

Mr. Nelson . . .	1	0	0
Friends . . .	0	2	6

Crayke.

Mrs. Burnet . . .	0	5	0
Mr. Rayner . . .	0	4	0
Mrs. Pape . . .	0	3	0
Mr. Linton . . .	0	2	6

Raskelf.

Mr. Waites . . .	0	2	6
Mr. Hodgson . . .	0	2	6
Collection . . .	0	5	1

Carlton Husthwaite.

Mr. Ward . . .	1	0	0
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Thormanby.

Mr. Robinson . . .	0	10	0
Mr. Brown . . .	0	5	0
Mr. Plummer . . .	0	2	6
Mrs. Knowlson . . .	0	2	6

East Moors.

John Hewgill . . .	0	2	6
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Harum.

Mr. Smith . . .	0	15	0
Mr. Cattle . . .	0	10	0
Collection . . .	0	10	6

Helmsley.

Mr. Burdral . . .	0	5	6
Mrs. Harrison . . .	0	2	6

	£	s.	d.		£	s.	d.
Mr. Gooch . . .	0	2	6	<i>Cold Kirby</i> . . .	0	5	6
Collection . . .	0	19	8	<i>Hawaby</i> . . .	0	10	0
<i>Rivaulx.</i>				<i>Alne Chapel</i> . . .	2	0	0
Mr. Freer . . .	0	10	0	<i>Sheriff Hutton ditto</i>	2	0	0
Mr. Howard . . .	0	5	0	<i>Raskelf ditto</i> . . .	2	0	0
				<i>Tholthorp Collection</i>	0	5	5

As far as can be ascertained, with some two or three exceptions, the whole of the above list of Subscribers have passed away ; but in many instances, their children and grandchildren have been and now are amongst the most liberal supporters of the Methodist cause.

One or two of the places and names mentioned above, are deserving of passing notice as they do not come within our compass farther on in the work.

Helmsley, in 1858 made the head of a Circuit, was until that time connected with Easingwold. It was favoured with the ministry of one of Mr. Wesley's early friends, the Rev. Dr. Conyers, a good man, but whose Calvinistic tendencies to some extent separated him from Mr. Wesley. He was the means of awakening many, and indirectly of forming the Society there, as, on his removal, those who had been awakened could only find spiritual help and guidance amongst the Methodists. In this neighbourhood, in 1782, was born John Brown, who in the 19th year of his age became a Wesleyan minister ; and who, in the language of the Minutes of Conference, is said to have "in mental vigour, moral worth, studious diligence, ministerial ability, and spiritual usefulness, excelled most of his contemporaries." He died in London in the 29th year of his age. His remains are laid close by Mr.

Wesley's tomb, behind City Road Chapel. Amongst his spiritual children was the Rev. A. E. Farrar,—father of the Rev. John Farrar.

Hawnby, now part of the Helmsley Circuit has the honour of being the mother church of Methodism in this part of Yorkshire.

The manner in which Methodism was introduced into *Hawnby* was somewhat remarkable and was as follows :—“ Two men were at work in the neighbourhood, and being overcome with heat and fatigue, they lay down by the side of the hedge and fell asleep. They dreamed they were not fit to die and appear before God, and were much affected by the deep and painful sense of guilt and danger produced on their minds by the Holy Spirit. After conversing with each other on the subject, they agreed to name the matter to Mr. John Hugill, and were surprised to find that a similar impression had been made on his mind also. They looked around for advice and direction, but alas ! no one seemed to understand their case. One of them applied to the clergyman, who told him that his was a case of religious melancholy, and that the best advice he could give him was that he should go into company and strive to enjoy himself. But God was leading them by the right way, though it was a way that *they* knew not. He had given them “ the spirit of bondage again to fear,” and the time drew near when they were to receive the “ Spirit of adoption.” By the good providence of God, a newspaper fell into their hands containing an advertisement that at a certain time Mr. Wesley intended to preach at Newcastle. Mr. John Hugill and a few like-minded with himself

went to hear that truly apostolic man, though the distance from Hawnby was about sixty miles.

They heard him preach two or three times, and though they did not then obtain a sense of pardon, they were taught "the plan of salvation through faith in Christ," and encouraged to seek and expect the bestowment of this blessing. On their return from Newcastle they succeeded, after much opposition, in introducing Methodism into their native village; and a few years afterwards were visited by Mr. Wesley. He says:—"On July 7th, 1757, I rode through one of the pleasantest parts of England to HORNBY (Hawnby). Here the zealous landlord turned all the Methodists out of their houses. This proved a singular kindness, for they built some little houses at the end of the town, in which forty or fifty of them live together. Hence, with much ado, I found my way to Robin Hood's Bay, and preached on the quay to the greatest part of the town. All (except one or two who were wise in their own eyes) seemed to receive the truth in love. This day, between Helmsley and Kirkby Moorside, we rode over a little river, which suddenly disappears and after running a mile underground, rises again and pursues its course."

Hawnby was also favoured by occasional visits from Mr. Burdsall. In his memoirs his first visit there is thus recorded:—

"Previous to the first Sabbath in March, 1793, a friend of mine proposed to me to visit Hornby, in the North Riding of Yorkshire, to which I consented, and on the above day we proceeded on our journey.

We tarried at Cold Kirby, near Hamilton, on our way, where I preached to a well-behaved people. The master of the factory was one of my hearers, and from that time he turned to the Lord, and continued steadfast unto the end. From this place we proceeded to Hornby, accompanied by many of the Kirby people, and here I preached on that and the following evening. On Tuesday, after viewing the three great hills in the neighbourhood, we went on to Helmsley Blackmoor, where I spoke in the afternoon, and at Hareham in the evening, to a pleasing and warm-hearted people. I asked them if they could sing the tune called 'The Fall of Babylon.' This they did, and such melody and life in singing I have seldom heard. I preached from Rev. xviii. 4: 'Come out of her my people, that ye be not partakers of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues.' The Lord was with us indeed, and made it a time to be remembered. When I had concluded I thought I could have gone ten miles further to have enjoyed such another season. Blessed, yea for ever blessed be Thy Holy Name, O Lord, that ever Thou calledst me to be a Methodist preacher."*

At *Ampleforth*, which also now forms part of the Helmsley Circuit, was born, five years before the first organization of the Methodist movement, George Cussons, of humble parentage. He became by occupation a joiner; at twenty years of age, he united himself to the Methodist Society; and on removing to Helmsley was much noticed by Dr. Conyers, who became his spiritual guide and faithful friend.

* *Richard Burdsall's Memoirs*, p. 253.

After a time Mr. Cussons again removed to London, where he became friendly with Mr. Wesley ; was one of the first visitors and directors of the Strangers' Friend Society, and the first projector and one of the most liberal supporters of the Naval and Military Bible Society, the forerunner of the great British and Foreign Bible Society. For a period of more than sixty years, Mr. Cussons walked and lived as seeing Him who is invisible ; and sweetly fell asleep in Jesus, on Friday, the sixth day of June, 1817, aged eighty-two years.

In the spring of 1829, Samuel Hick, paid his last visit to the Circuit, arriving at Easingwold on the 4th of April. He was the guest of Mr. William Dixon, then and for many years after a pious and very highly esteemed Class-leader and Exhorter. The Revs. Thomas Garbutt and John Roadhouse, were the ministers of the Circuit. In his inimitable "Village Blacksmith," the late Mr. Everett gives the following particulars of this visit. On his arrival at Easingwold, "being well acquainted with Mrs. Roadhouse, he deposited with her two pounds, saying that he was afraid of losing it, adding with a smile, "I have cheated Matty out of this." Mr. Roadhouse, had been his banker in the Snaith Circuit, but having dealt the separate portions out to him with parsimony, he thus made a change. His liberality, however was again put under arrest, and when he was prevented from giving the whole away, he went among the more opulent and begged that he might be made their almoner. One instance of unnecessary though not inconsiderate bounty occurred while here. He stepped into the house of a barber, re-

questing to be shaved. Inquiring of the man whether he had any other means of supporting his family, and being answered in the negative, Samuel put a shilling into his hand. This produced a grateful feeling, and the man, in Samuel's estimation, was prepared for anything that might follow. He talked to him on the subject of religion, and then proposed prayer. The different members of the family were speedily on their knees, and the worshipping group were open to the inspection of the next customer who might turn in for the operation that had been performed on the officiating priest. A thousand persons might be found to part with their money in the same way, but a thousand persons of the same piety might be found, who, in the same place and under the same circumstances, could not have brought themselves to act thus, and might be justified in such conduct without pronouncing a sentence of condemnation against Samuel.

“Of the affection and attention of Messrs. Roadhouse and Garbutt, he spoke in grateful terms; and besides preaching, attended, in connection with them, several Missionary meetings. Descanting on a part of his labours, he remarked in his own peculiar way,—‘I preached last night on the other side of Hambleton Hills, and the Lord and Mr. Roadhouse and me held a Missionary meeting;’ denoting that the Divine Being was signally present in the influence of his Spirit on the hearts of the people, (without whose presence all Missionary meetings are vain to the persons assembled), as though he had been rendered visible to the eye. ‘It is a mountainous country,’ continued he, ‘but very pleasant; the people came

from all quarters, from hill and dale; the chapel was crowded, and we had a good time. I never saw people more kind.' 'I have found some of my country friends here,' he remarks; 'one of them, a woman born at Aberford. Her eldest son and daughter have died very happy, and if I live till next week, I shall have to preach her funeral sermon.' He then spoke of the joy he experienced, farther stating his belief that the Lord had 'as surely sent him into the Circuit as He sent Jonah to preach to the Ninevites. He waters my soul with the dews of heaven.' "

Hornby, was another of the places he visited, where he rendered himself amusingly popular by waiting upon the clergyman of the parish, requesting him to give them a speech at the Missionary meeting. The reverend gentleman declining, Samuel tried him on another point.

Samuel. "Will you please then give us a pound for the Missions?"

Clergyman. "That is too much, and I have no silver upon me; but if you will give me silver for a note, I will give you half a crown."

Samuel. "Nay, give me the note, it is a noble cause."

Samuel's companion having a little more delicacy of feeling about him than himself, perceiving that the pound was more than it was prudent to urge, offered, in order to relieve the clergyman from his importunity, to give him him twenty shillings in silver. Samuel immediately, in an altered tone, said:—

"Give the gentleman five shillings."

Clergyman. "That will not do."

Samuel. "Ten, then, Sir."

Clergyman. "I will give you half-a-crown."

Samuel. "Not less than five shillings, if you please, Sir."

"The full change was given, and an apology was offered for Samuel, for whom it was fortunate an apologist was at hand. He, on the other hand, dropped upon his knees in the room to improve the occasion, and prayed devoutly and fervently for the Divine blessing upon the Clergyman."

Without placing the least dependence upon works, he toiled as though heaven were alone to be won by them. "If I had ten thousand bodies and souls," said he, "they should all be spent in the service of God." At Carlton, Sheriff Hutton, and several other places, the word of exhortation was made a blessing to the people. His usefulness and popularity appeared to advance with his age. Persons who had heard of him were prompted by curiosity to attend his public addresses, and those who had benefitted by them followed him from place to place ; so that with the curious, the profited, and the stated hearers, the chapels were generally crowded. In addition to evening preaching, travelling, and visiting the sick, he attended three Missionary meetings in one week, moving about in the 79th year of his age with the apparent vigour of youth and with the fire of a new convert. His friend Mr. Dawson met him at Easingwold on the 14th May, and they set out together to Helmsley to attend the Missionary meeting. When about three miles from Helmsley, the horse Mr. Hick was riding "took fright at a

chaise upon which some white bags were suspended enclosing some fighting cocks, wheeled round, and he fell off. "Though no bones," says Mr. Dawson "were either broken or dislocated, yet the shock was felt through his whole frame. He nevertheless attended the meeting, but soon found it necessary to leave, when he was taken to the house of a friend." The scene which followed would form a subject as suitable for the pencil of a Wilkie as the pen of a divine. Bleeding being deemed necessary, a medical man was sent for, but in consequence of absence his place was supplied by one of his pupils. On his appearance Samuel threw off his coat and turned up his sleeves, as if about to enter on the business of the smithy. Stretching out his arm, his hand meanwhile grasping the handle of a long brush, and pointing to the vein, "There my lad," said he, "strike there," having the phlebotomy and the quadruped present in the mind, rather than the lancet and the human being. The youth, under the impression of fear, pricked the vein, but no blood appeared. "Try again." The experiment was again fruitlessly made. He instantly turned up the sleeve of the other arm, as if going to another job, or as if he intended to give additional strength to one at which he had just failed, and determinately pointing to the spot said, "Try here, lad, strike here, and see if thou canst get anything." This experiment, with the exception of a few drops, was as ineffectual as those that preceded. The youth was overcome with fear, and withdrew. Fortunately for Samuel, the surgeon came about an hour afterwards and bled him copiously, after which he was placed in bed.

While bleeding, he said, "Glory be to God, if I die, I'll get the sooner to heaven." In the course of the same evening, while Mr. Dawson was preaching, the vein was opened by some accident, when Mrs. Bentley, who was at chapel, and at whose house he lodged, was sent for; and through her kind attention aid was procured and the arm again bandaged. He thought his work was done, and said to the friends around him, in a tone of holy triumph, "I am *bownd* home, glory be to God! I am *bownd* home." He expressed a wish to see Mr. Dawson again, who had called upon him before; and who no sooner closed the service in the evening than he made all possible speed to him. On entering the room Samuel accosted him with a full flow of spirits and in tears,—
"I am *bownd* home, *bairn*! Glory be to God, I am very happy! I should have bled to death, *bairn*, but I happened to *wakken*." He next proceeded, "I want my will made, and you must make it." Mr. D. not deeming him so near his end as he imagined, and adapting his language and imagery to Samuel's thinkings and knowledge of words, answered: "Well, Sammy, if it is to be so, you are a *brown sheller*;" referring by that, as Samuel well knew, to the *ripe* fruit—*brown*, and ready to drop from the tree, and which, when taken into the hand, falls out of the *husk*. He was acquainted with Samuel's character, and beheld him as *ripe* and *ready* for a blessed immortality. "Yes," replied Samuel, "I am *bownd* to glory?" The will was drawn up according to the best directions he was able to give; but as Martha was both cashier and accountant, he knew very little of his own affairs,

and of course found it necessary afterwards to have it altered.

“He met with his accident on the Thursday, and on Saturday was so far recovered as to be able to return to Easingwold in a gig. He preached at Easingwold on the Sunday evening, and proceeded to York in a gig on Tuesday morning. Reduced as he was in his bodily strength, such was the unconquerable nature of the spirit he possessed, aided by the prospects of a better world, that he appeared more like a person who had just risen from a slight indisposition, than as having walked a few paces back into life from the verge of the grave.”

During the next decade the Societies appear to have made steady and on the whole continued progress. At its commencement in 1830-31, under the ministry of the Rev. James Jones and James C. Hindson, the Circuit was favoured with another gracious revival, in which some were brought to Christ who have been and still are eminently useful in maintaining and promoting the interests of Methodism in the Circuit. Towards its close in 1838, an additional Minister, the Rev. Charles North, was appointed to the Circuit; primarily with a view to more efficiently supplying the increasing wants of the Societies on the Helmsley side of the Circuit. In 1839, the centenary year of Methodism, the number of members in the Circuit was 1057. The annual subscription to the Wesleyan Missionary Society was £291; and the offering of the Circuit to the Centenary Fund, amounted to nearly £500. Such had been the progress in this rural district of Methodism during its first century.

In 1846, the continued love of the people for the Foreign Mission work, and their interest in its operations, was shown by their holding a missionary fair in Easingwold. The contributions, which were additional to the ordinary subscriptions and collections of the year, consisted of sheep, pigs, poultry, rabbits, ploughs, harrows, spades, forks, &c., &c., and realized upwards of £120. Their interest in this great work was doubtless very much increased by the occasional visits of that noble advocate for Christian Missions, the Rev. Robert Newton D.D.; and great was the joy of the members when it became known that on retirement from the active duties of the ministry, in 1854, he had determined to come and live among them. The honour he thus conferred upon the Circuit was universally felt, and it was hoped that at least his wise counsels, if not his more active talents, might be of use to the Circuit; but his Divine Master thought otherwise. Fourteen days after his arrival at Easingwold, he was called to enter on his heavenly inheritance.

This able Minister, and *good* man was born on September 8th, 1780, at Roxby, a village on the sea coast in Yorkshire, the son of a farmer who had opened his house for the preaching of the first Methodists. His house was blessed like that of Obed Edom; all his eight children joined the Wesleyan Society, and four of his sons became noted for their ability and usefulness as preachers. Robert Newton commenced his ministry in 1799. His success was immediate, and his congregations everywhere crowded. He was tall, and well proportioned, with "a large front, and eyes sublime;" "a man fit to

stand before kings." His voice was a deep musical bass, incomparable in the variety and sweetness of its modulation. His manner in the pulpit was neither declamatory nor too colloquial, but subdued, solemn, and irresistibly impressive. Out of the pulpit, as well as in it, he seemed anointed with a Divine unction; so that one of his fellow labourers, who heard him in his early years and who was converted under his ministrations, says that veneration was everywhere felt for his character; that it was "next to impossible to spend any time in conversation with him without perceiving that his intercourse with God was intimate and sanctifying; that he dwelt in God, and God in him." With such a spirit and such ability his ministrations could not fail to be effective; if they produced not usually what are called "revivals," they were continually attended by the conversion of individual hearers; they added not a few useful men to the ministry; they built up the Societies, and left a deep and general impression on the communities where he laboured. His language was always so simple as to be intelligible to the rudest peasant, and so correct and pertinent as to delight the most fastidious scholar. His unrivalled talent for popular speaking was soon appreciated, and thenceforth he was the representative Methodist orator. While in the metropolis, he co-operated with Coke on behalf of Missions, and caught the infectious zeal of that tireless man; and during the rest of his life was the most popular advocate of Missions in England. When he commenced his public labours, there were but fifty Wesleyan missionaries, with about seventeen thousand communicants under their

care; he saw them increased to more than three hundred and fifty Missionaries and one hundred thousand communicants. He doubtless had faults which he mourned before God in secret; but what they were his biographer says he was never able to discern during an acquaintance of more than half a century. A more pure and spotless character he declares he never knew.

"He arrived at Easingwold on Tuesday, April 11th; and soon afterwards the Rev. John Rossell, the Superintendent Wesleyan Minister, called upon him to enquire after his welfare, to present his congratulations, and to bespeak his aid and counsel in respect to the Circuit, at the same time expressing a hope that the venerable man would be spared for a considerable time to serve the cause of Christ. He answered with impressive solemnity, "I thank you, sir, but my work is done." On the 25th he was struck with paralysis, and early on Sunday morning April 30th, 1854, the last breath had passed away."

A granite monument, by Macdonald of Aberdeen, marks the spot in the quiet and picturesque churchyard of Easingwold where the remains of this great and good man rest. It is of grey Aberdeen granite, the slab on which the inscription is placed being in relief and highly polished. The design is simple and chaste, and the whole monument, consisting of a square pedestal elevated on a graduated base, is massive and imposing, yet without ostentation; characteristic alike of the dead and of the system of which he was so illustrious an impersonation. The inscription, from the pen of the late Rev. W. M. Bunting, is as follows:—

IN MEMORY OF
ROBERT NEWTON, D.D.
 A MAN EMINENTLY GIFTED AND HONOURED OF GOD,
 EQUALLY DISTINGUISHED AS A CHRISTIAN ORATOR,
 TEACHER, AND DIVINE.
 IN LABOURS MORE ABUNDANT,
 IN WORD, IN CONVERSATION, IN CHARITY, IN SPIRIT, IN FAITH,
 IN PURITY, AN EXAMPLE OF THE BELIEVERS.
 DURING HALF A CENTURY OF SIGNAL USEFULNESS
 AS A WESLEYAN METHODIST MINISTER,
 HE WALKED HUMBLY WITH GOD,
 GLORYING ONLY IN
 THE CROSS.
 AND AT THE LAST ASCRIBING THE HARVEST OF HIS TOILS,
 AND HIS OWN DEEP CONSOLATION, TO
 CHRIST JESUS.
 ATTESTING AND BLESSING
 HE DIED APRIL 30TH, 1854, AGED 73.

A beautiful mural tablet was also erected in the Wesleyan Chapel. It is executed in fine Carrara marble, and is placed upon a ground of highly-finished black marble, with an inscription from the pen of the late Rev. R. Sergeant. In the same burial ground are also interred the remains of the late Rev. John Gill who died in 1837, of his wife, and of five daughters, of a daughter of the late Rev. William Towers and also one of the late Rev. William Wilkinson, three children of the late Rev. Thomas Garbutt, three of Rev. John Nowell, and also one of the Rev. W. H. Cave.

In 1865, through the liberality chiefly of the late Mr. C. T. Bainbridge of Easingwold—who for nearly fifty years had been an active and liberal supporter of the various institutions of Methodism in the Circuit and who died in 1868—and of his son Mr. William Bainbridge, of Yarm, the chapel in

Easingwold had the principal portion of its debt paid off. At an outlay of five hundred guineas, the chapel was afterwards refitted and greatly improved during the time when the Revs. Joseph Garrett and W. H. Cave were the ministers in the Circuit. The personal popularity of these ministers and the great esteem in which they were held, tended greatly to the success of a bazaar held in Easingwold in 1866, by which nearly the whole additional cost was paid off.

The Rev. Henry Holmes is a native of the Circuit, though sent out from Newcastle ; and the Rev. T. W. Blanshard, author of "The Methodist Demosthenes," resided for many years in the Circuit previous to commencing his ministerial work.

RASKELF.

Soon after the regular preaching services were commenced in Easingwold, a young female of the name of Elizabeth Hodgson was brought to God while attending the Methodist services there. Her parents regularly attended the services of the Established Church, and had taught her in early life to pray to God and repeat the Church catechism. She appears to have been carefully trained, especially to reverence for the Lord's day and to cautiously speak the truth at all times ; two things which at that period were generally very much neglected. At this period of her life, though unacquainted with the spirituality of the Divine law and the excellencies of the gospel of Christ Jesus, yet from her general stability, the correctness of her morals, and her uniform attention to public and private religious duties, she was deemed a Methodist by her neighbours, though it does not appear that at that time she had any acquaintance with the Methodist Society, for it was not until about the twenty-eighth year of her age that she heard John Gualter preach at Easingwold. Under this sermon she was convinced of her sinfulness and need of pardoning mercy, and soon afterwards obtained peace with God "through our Lord Jesus Christ."

She then became anxious that the people in Raskelf should have an opportunity of hearing the gospel in that way that had been so useful to herself, and invited the Methodist preachers to Raskelf,

where they soon formed a Society, of which she became an active and useful member. In 1800, the number of members appears to have been twelve ; and at the first quarterly meeting they sent ten shillings and sixpence as their contribution to the expenses of the Circuit, subscribing also in that year five shillings to the Yearly Collection, and four shillings and two-pence to the Kingswood Schools.

Miss Hodgson, eight years after she became a Methodist, was united in marriage to Mr. Robert Peacock. They resolved, wherever their lot might be cast to open a door for the servants of the Lord ; and having settled upon a farm at Stonegrave they invited the preachers to their house, where the preaching afterwards became established, to the great profit of many who came to hear it. She lived as a useful and good Methodist for about fifty years. One of Mrs. Peacock's daughters became the wife of one of the first ministers in the Circuit, the Rev. James Needham, and another was married to the Rev. Enoch Williams.

No great progress either numerically or financially seems to have been made in the village for some years ; in 1825, the number of members only reached sixteen, though at that time the congregations were good. A neat and substantial chapel was built in 1835, which was refitted and greatly improved in 1870.

HUTTON SESSAY.

METHODISM was introduced into Hutton Sessay at a later period than any other village in the Circuit, except Brandsby. Mr. Edward Rimmington, who had for some years practised successfully as a surgeon at Monk Fryston in the Selby Circuit, having determined to retire from the active duties of his profession, and being connected by marriage with the Easingwold Circuit, after much prayer for Divine direction removed to this village in 1846. Mr. Rimmington had been for many years an active and devoted Christian man, but had only a short time before this publicly begun to call sinners to repentance. The power of God was manifest in a remarkable manner under his earnest preaching, and many had through his ministry been brought to Christ. When he came to Hutton Sessay "there was neither church, chapel, preaching, nor, as far as he could learn, one single soul converted to God. It is pleasing and profitable to follow the servant of God in his secret retirement and communings with his Heavenly Father, and hear him say, 'I trust He who has led us all our life long and sustained us, who has given us food to eat and raiment to put on, will not fail nor forsake us at Hutton.' My soul was refreshed by the following words, 'and there I will meet with thee and commune with thee from above the mercy seat, from between the two cherubims which are upon the ark of the testimony, of all things which I will give thee in commandment unto the

children of Israel.' I said, 'It is enough, my Lord, the promise is mine; I claim it, I live on it, it shall be fulfilled, and at Hutton my God shall bless me, and, I believe, make me a blessing.' And it was done unto him according to his faith. Before he had been a month at Hutton, several were converted to God through his instrumentality. He formed a Christian society, fitted up his barn as a chapel," hospitably entertained the preachers, itinerant and local, while he lived, as his widow did for many years afterwards until she removed from the village. "And where he continued to feed his own people whom, by the grace of God he had gathered, until the great Shepherd called him home."

Mr. Rimmington was eminently useful both in Easingwold and in the adjoining Circuits. His services were in great demand, and perhaps beyond his strength freely given. He preached at Thormanby on the 10th August, was taken seriously ill directly afterwards, and after bearing on his death bed a glorious testimony to the faithfulness of Christ and the all sufficiency of the atonement, calmly entered into rest on the 25th August, 1848.

The services at Hutton Sessay were continued in the barn as above stated for several years after Mr. Rimmington's death, until in 1863, chiefly through the exertions of Mr. Barnitt of Birdforth, a chapel was erected in which the Society have since worshipped.

CARLTON.

CARLTON was placed on the Circuit plan in 1813, when the Revs. Samuel Gates and William Catton were in the Circuit. A small class of five members had been formed there, consisting of George and Elizabeth Brown, Ann Bosomworth, Jane Law, and Catherine Pearson, who sent the amount of six shillings and eightpence to the September Quarterly Meeting in that year, towards the maintenance of the Preachers and other expenses of the Circuit. In 1820-21, the number of members was doubled, there being ten members with eight on trial; and at this number the Society remained for nearly half a century. They worshipped in a low upper room, which was used on week-days for a school, but at the back of which only a very juvenile scholar could stand upright. The place was very unsuited for either a Chapel or school purposes, but there the Society worshipped and the class was met until 1869. During this year the desire was put into the heart of Mr. William Relton, who resided in the village, to endeavour to obtain a chapel. Mr. Relton purchased some property in order to obtain a suitable site, which he generously presented to the Society. A neat chapel was built; the congregation largely increased; the Holy Spirit was graciously poured out; many were converted to God, and the chapel has already been made a great blessing to the village and neighbourhood. The contributions of the Carlton Society during the past twelve months for Circuit purposes were upwards of

£13, and to the Missionary Society during that period £10 6s. 6d.

KILBURN.

THE first Methodist Preacher who visited Kilburn, and who preached in a bakehouse belonging to Mrs. Grace Lawns, was Michael Fenwick, about 1793. He was entertained, on visiting the village, by Mr. Thomas Burton, and although some curiosity to see the Methodist preacher was excited, but few went to hear him. In 1797 or 1798, Mr. Joseph Smith, of Wildon Grange, who had occasionally attended the Methodist ministry at Thirsk and other places, became concerned for his soul, and invited the Rev. Henry Foster, then in the Malton Circuit, to visit Kilburn, which he did, and preached in the bakehouse as above. Wildon Grange became the home of the preachers both travelling and local from that time, (as it still remains,) and a great multitude of these messengers of the Cross look back with pleasure to the unvarying kindness and liberal hospitality extended to them by the different members of the family at Wildon during the last seventy-five years. In 1799, Messrs. Ogilvie, Gilead, and Watson were appointed to the Circuit; and Mr. Ogilvie formed a Society in Kilburn, consisting of Michael Medley, the Leader, Grace Lawns, in whose bakehouse the preaching was held, William Lawns, her son, Joseph Smith, John Trenholm, Jane Burton, William Fox, James Wilson and Thomas Rymer, the latter of whom became an acceptable and useful Local-

preacher. The following year more were added. After preaching for a little while in the bakehouse, for some reason they moved to the house of William Fox, where preaching continued till the year 1805, when Mr. Smith hired a large room which had been used for a dancing room, and fitted it up for a chapel. The Society fluctuated very much ; Sometimes twenty members, at others, six ; and in the year 1835 there were but two Methodists in Kilburn,—the rest of the Society were in the neighbourhood. The good work of God began, however, to revive early in the year 1838 ; and the friends who had been so long discouraged went to the prayer-meeting full of faith and soon found that they did not pray in vain. After that, the people flocked to the house of prayer “like doves to their windows.” Frequently the service, on a week-day evening, had to commence half an hour before the usual time, the place being crowded, and numbers were not able to gain an entrance. For some weeks there was seldom a meeting but souls were in distress. There was no noise or wild-fire, nor any disturbance. Many persons were under powerful influence, and were afraid of attending the meetings lest they should be forced to cry aloud for mercy. About twenty-seven in Kilburn were added to the Society. This blessed work was not confined to Kilburn, but extended to Wass, Old-Stead, and Coxwold ; in which places Societies were formed and regular meetings established. A large barn was fitted up, which was occupied for some months. A chapel became absolutely necessary ; and principally through the active and persevering exertions of Mr. William Smith of Wildon,

(who with his brothers had long been amongst the most liberal supporters of Methodism in the Circuit,) this was accomplished in 1838. The chapel, which is "neat, substantial, and commodious," was opened on the 4th of September in that year, by the Rev. W.B. Stephenson from York; Mr. Charles Robinson of Acomb, a local evangelist of some note, preaching on the following Sunday.

Michael Fenwick, who first preached the Gospel here, was one of the eccentric characters of early Methodism. He had a weak head, but his most intimate friends generally supposed him to possess a *good heart*. He travelled some time with Mr. Wesley, but his eccentricities were so great that he was dismissed from that post. He almost idolized Mr. Wesley, and imitated him as far as he was able in his manner of speaking, praying, preaching and writing; and it was generally acknowledged that he *mimicked* the latter so well, that it was difficult for the mere listener to discriminate between them. He dwelt in the house of a gentleman near Bridlington for some years previous to his death, and in that neighbourhood he finished his pilgrimage. It pleased God to take him hence in a violent storm of thunder and lightning in the year 1797; he and a companion had taken refuge in a mill which was struck by the lightning, and Mr. Fenwick was killed. It is, perhaps, not unworthy of notice that a pious woman in the neighbourhood dreamed the night before he was killed, "that she was standing at her own door, and looking up she saw the heavens open and two angels descended to the place (the *mill* where he and his companion had fled for refuge from the storm), and

in a short time she saw them ascend towards heaven again with a glorified spirit accompanying them ; and as they ascended, she distinctly heard their voices singing 'Hallelujah !' and she exclaimed, 'It is the voice of Mr. Fenwick which I hear.' " This dream she related to several persons previous to the awful circumstance occurring, so that this puts it beyond the possibility of being fictitious.

Henry Foster commenced the work of an itinerant preacher in 1780. He was born at Lestingham near Pickering, and "for several years he was a burning and shining light." At a love-feast held at Malton about the time referred to above, he says "he was so filled with the power of God that he cried out, 'Lord, stay thine hand or the vessel will burst.' " He was only able to do the work of the ministry for about seven years, and died happy in the Lord on the 12th April, 1787.

Early in 1845, soon after the death of Mr. William Smith, who had for some time had charge of the Kilburn Society, and who was a very able, devoted, and godly man, his not less able and devoted brother-in-law, Mr. E. Rimmington, made his first attempt to preach at Kilburn. His visit there and the services held were made a blessing to the people, and were the commencement of a course of public labour on the part of Mr. Rimmington, which ended with his death four years afterwards, but are pre-eminent in the history of the Circuit as seasons of especial revival and blessing.

COXWOLD.

COXWOLD though it cannot boast of many memorials of early Methodism has had a small Society since the commencement of the present century, its services having been held during a large portion of that time in a schoolroom in the village, and for a few years in "the high school," which really formed a portion of the house of the Incumbent of the parish. For a great many years in its early history the Society was under the leadership of Mr. William Smith, of Wildon, and afterwards, till his death, of his brother Robert, who resided in Coxwold. By the kind permission of Sir G. O. Wombwell, Bart., of Newbro Park, the lord of the manor, who granted a lease of a suitable site, a very neat and substantial chapel was erected in 1864, in which the Society has since worshipped.

Coxwold is of some historic interest as having been for several years the residence of Lawrence Sterne, and where his "Tristram Shandy," and several other of his well-known works, were written. They do not, as has been observed, "well comport with the sacred character of his profession as a clergyman, and are the more to be censured as the manifest improprieties which disfigure their many beauties cannot be palliated, like those of some earlier writers, by the unrefined tastes and feelings of the age in which he lived." He resided in Coxwold seven years and enjoyed himself not a little in this rural retreat. He says, writing to a friend, "I am

as happy as a prince at Coxwold, and I wish you could see in how princely a manner I live : 'tis a land of plenty. I sit down alone to venison, fish, and wild fowl, or a couple of fowls or ducks, with curds, strawberries, and cream, and all the simple plenty which a rich valley (under Hambleton Hills) can produce ; with a clean cloth on my table, and a bottle of wine on my right hand to drink your health. I have an hundred hens and chickens about my yard, and not a parishioner catches a hare, a rabbit, or a trout, but he brings it as an offering to me." His residence, *Shandy Hall*, still stands at the western entrance to the village. His great wit and loose habits failed to give him even temporal comfort. He died in great misery in a London garret in 1768.

HUSTHWAITE.

THIS was one of the places in the Circuit first visited by the early Methodist Preachers. At how early a period the voice of the first ambassador was heard there we have no record, but in an old letter now before the author, and written nearly half a century ago, the writer in giving the reminiscences of his own youthful days says, "It was said about this time, (1797) that all Husthwaite had turned Methodists, with many ridiculous tales about them. I rode past the place one day, and saw a man sowing, and looked hard at him to see what he was like, for I thought he would be a Husthwaite man and most likely a Methodist." It was from Husthwaite, and after preaching there, that Mr. Smith of Wildon invited Mr. Foster to go over with him and preach at Kilburn, and here the preaching of Mr. William Smith of Easingwold was very useful. Perhaps from the want of regular services or from some other cause, so far from "all Husthwaite turning Methodists," there appears to have been, on the formation of the Circuit in 1800, only some five or six members of Society, sending a contribution of seven shillings to the Quarterly Meeting. In 1802, this amount was reduced to five shillings, and then the village disappears from the Circuit records until 1814. At this time the Society numbered eight members, consisting of Francis Tesseyman, Leader of the Class, John and Ann Wragg, Ann Shepherd, Betty and Francis Batty, Elizabeth Warin, and Jane

Yallow. For many years after that time the Society appears to have made but little progress. In 1821, the late Mr. Thos. Nelson appears as the Leader of the class. He was for many years a most active and zealous member of Society there; the chapel, which was erected in 1841, is on ground which he gave for the purpose. During the last thirty years considerable progress has been made: the chapel is filled with an attentive and respectable congregation, and the number of members in Society is about fifty. The late Rev. George Greenwood, who died in 1865, was born at Husthwaite in the year 1809. He was appointed to Macclesfield in 1837, and laboured with diligence for twenty-seven years in many important Circuits. As a preacher he gave prominence to the great doctrines of the Gospel, and combined fervour and fidelity with love to souls. The success of his ministry may be traced in the Circuits where he laboured, in some cases with remarkable distinctness. He died at Ripon on the 15th February, 1865, in the fifty-seventh year of his age, and the twenty-eighth of his ministry.

YEARSLEY.

DURING the ministry of the Revs. Samuel Bardsley and John Poole in the Circuit in 1811, Yearsley was placed on the Circuit plan ; though it is very likely as there was at that time a Society of eleven members, that occasional if not regular preaching-services had been held in the village. The Society at that period consisted of Ann Stillingfleet, widow, who appears to have been the Leader of the class ; Mary Stillingfleet, Benjamin Lund, Henry Simonson, Eliza Dowthwaite, James and John Snowball, William and Elizabeth Wilson, Thomas Lumley, and Robert Watson. Their services were held for awhile in a cottage, then for many years in a room used as a dame's school, and for the last twenty years, until now, in the house of Mr. John Lund, who has for the long period of fifty-eight years been the Leader of the small Society there. In the summer of last year (1871), chiefly through the exertions of Mr. Robert Wood, a chapel was erected from plans by Mr. Edward Taylor, of York. It is of chaste and beautiful design—a model for a village chapel, and reflects great credit on Mr. Wood and the Committee who have assisted him, for the spirited manner in which they commenced and have carried on the erection. The chapel has just been opened by the Rev. W. T. Radcliffe, of Manchester, and the Rev. John Hornabrook, of Headingley College. May the great Head of the Church graciously visit His people there, and bless them.

BRANDSBY.

ALTHOUGH we have no record in the books of the Circuit of any regular services at Brandsby until quite modern days, it was the birth-place of a Minister who, during "the middle age" of Methodism, served the Connexion well, and who is deserving of notice in these "Memorials." The Rev. George Tindale was born at Brandsby on the 13th February, 1792. He gives the following account of his parentage and family:—"My parents were engaged in active life; they were upright and industrious, but strangers to true religion. Ever since I can remember, my father was embarked in the timber trade, first at Brandsby, afterwards at Norton, near Malton. My eldest sister was the second in the family who was brought to the knowledge of God, which took place by the happy death of a younger sister. A short time after, my other sisters at Malton, and myself at Hale, experienced the same grace."

His parents were strongly attached to the Established Church, but much opposed to the Methodists. They were greatly perplexed when their daughter began to meet in Class, and still more so on hearing that their only son had joined the Methodist Society. They, however, showed great affection for their children, and took a deep interest in their education. They trained them up in the habit of prayer, and in attending public worship, taught them to repeat the Church Catechism, and watched carefully over their moral conduct.

In the year 1805, he removed with his parents to Hull, where, by Divine mercy, he obtained that experimental acquaintance with religion, which was the defence and comfort of his future days. On his going to Hull, he attended the Church of the Rev. Mr. Dykes, and also occasionally heard the faithful preaching of the Rev. William Bramwell, who was then stationed in the Hull Circuit. For these two pious Ministers he had ever after a very cordial regard, for to their labours, under God, he attributed his first desires to flee from the wrath to come. He was sent out to travel by the Conference in 1814, to the Ripon Circuit. His usefulness, says Mr. Loft who was with him part of the time, "was very general, and very great, during both the years he laboured in the Ripon Circuit."

Mr. Tindale next joined Mr. Vasey, at Colne, in Lancashire, and resided in his house; they were very happy and useful together, but in the spring of 1817, a season of distressing affliction ensued, his kind superintendent was seized with typhus fever, and rapidly hastened to his reward. This disease also proved fatal to two of his children, and soon after, Mr. Tindale was afflicted by it in a violent degree. For a while his life was despaired of, but the presence of God was his support, and it pleased Him, who thus sustained him in the furnace, to restore him from the very gates of death.

He was struck with paralysis while speaking on behalf of the Wesleyan Missionary Society at Derby. In his address he adverted to the words addressed to the Rev. Walter Lawry, by the natives of Tonga, when he was about to leave them.

“When you came it was dark night on Tonga, now it begins to be light.” The latter clause he was applying to the state of the world in general, as beginning to be light, through what God had already done in the cause of Missions ; but his strength failing, he concluded, and fell on his hands and knees. His brethren supposing him to have fainted, carried him to the adjoining house. He breathed heavily through the night, and about five o’clock the next morning, April 18th, 1825, he passed away, greatly beloved and regretted, in the thirty-third year of his age.

For the past few years regular Sabbath services have been held in the house of Mr. J. White, where a small Society has been formed.

CRAYKE.

THE village of Crayke is of some historic interest. Situate on a commanding hill “(about two miles to the east of the town of Easingwold)” with the remains of the Norman Castle on its highest point, it is one of the first objects which strikes the eye of a visitor in the neighbourhood. It is said that Egfrid, king of Northumbria, in A.D. 685, granted the village of Crayke, and three miles in circuit round it, to Cuthbert, the famous saint and bishop of Lindisfarne, that he might have it as a resting-place on his journey to and from the city of York. Here, they say, St. Cuthbert shortly afterwards founded a dwelling for a society of monks, which appears to have remained till the time of the Danish invasion.

The oldest portion of the Castle now standing (supposed to have been built on the site of one of the castles of the Heptarchy) is of the Norman period, and is supposed to have been erected by a nephew of king Stephen. King Edward III. was lodged here in 1345. Its use as a place of defence passed away some time before the reign of Elizabeth; there were then standing little more than the present buildings, partly in ruins.

The Society at Crayke was formed toward the close of the last century. In 1801, it numbered twenty members, having Thomas Rickaby as the Leader of the class, and contributing six and six pence to the Yearly Collection and twelve and six

pence to the Kingswood Schools, and sending also a subscription of ten shillings towards the Conference debt. Previous to the formation of the Circuit, Crayke had probably regular preaching appointments as part of the York Circuit; as, under the ministry of the Rev. William Percival, Joseph Meek was converted there in 1791. Mr. Meek was then fifteen years old; he grew up a very devoted and zealous young man, and was very useful as a Local-preacher, his ministry being greatly owned of God. "In the year 1800, he entered the Wesleyan ministry, the duties of which he discharged with diligence and fidelity for thirty-nine years, when growing infirmities compelled him to become a supernumerary." After nearly sixty years membership with the church, and after bearing on his death-bed his testimony to the value of those important truths which had been the topics of his public ministry, and the consolations of which in the prospect of dissolution he abundantly experienced, he died in great peace at Preston in Lancashire, in the seventy-fourth year of his age.

William Percival, under whose preaching Joseph Meek was brought to seek God, served the Connexion with great acceptability and usefulness for nearly thirty years. "He applied himself very diligently to reading, prayer, and meditation. His animated manner and feeling address in the pulpit, and his open friendly way of conversing with people in their houses, made him acceptable wherever he was stationed." Mr. Percival died at Rochdale in 1803, leaving a widow and large family for whom a subscription was made realizing a sum of £500.

"This was the first time anything of the kind was done for the widow of a Methodist Preacher."

The Chapel at Crayke is the oldest in the Circuit, having been opened in 1787. (Easingwold, opened in 1785, having been rebuilt.) In this chapel the congregation has worshipped for upwards of eighty-five years. In the course of last year (1871) it was refitted and greatly improved. It is a somewhat curious fact that the deed of conveyance was not made until the chapel had been built ten years. The original trustees were George Walker, of Stillington, Cordwainer; William Smith, of Easingwold, Staymaker; Robert Spence, of York, Stationer; Joseph Agar, of York, Currier; William Dodd, of Easingwold, Carpenter; Thomas Thornum, of Easingwold, Yeoman; James Beal, of Farlington, Yeoman; and Joseph Meek, of Crayke, Yeoman; the deed bearing date the 31st day of March, 1797. All the above named trustees were men of some local note in early Methodism. George Walker, William Smith, Joseph Spence, and James Beal are noticed elsewhere. Joseph Meek is noticed above. William Dodd and Thomas Thornum both rank amongst the active members of the early Methodists in Easingwold. Joseph Agar was born at Kilburn; he appears to have settled in early life in York, and became an active and devoted member of Society there; a man of great liberality, but being a man of good business habits he amassed considerable wealth and died in old age and full of honour. One of his sons, Joseph Agar, a very holy man, entered the ministry. Another son, Mr. Benjamin Agar, was for many years one of the most active and liberal of York Methodists.

He has been succeeded by *his* son, Joseph Agar, who, like his father and grandfather, takes an active part in promoting the interests of Methodism in his native city. There being some deficiency in the Trust deed, and Mr. Agar only being entered in the court (the property being copyhold), he gave on the second of April, 1803, a curious bond for the sum of £400, to Thomas Rickaby, William Judson, and William Bland, of Crayke, and John Skaife of Easingwold, to the effect that he would carry out the purposes of the model deed so far as the property in question was concerned, *i.e.*, that such persons as were appointed by the yearly Conference of the people called Methodists should be permitted without let or hindrance to preach in the chapel, and the premises be used for carrying out the whole economy of Methodism, failing this he would pay the sum of four hundred pounds; the bond of course, to be null and void if these purposes were so carried out.

The number of members at present in Society at Crayke is 38.

SHERIFF HUTTON.

SHERIFF HUTTON, numerically the second place of importance in the Circuit, is also of historic note. Its ancient castle, originally built in the reign of King Stephen, was enlarged and strongly fortified by Ralph de Nevil, first Earl of Westmoreland. It remained in the possession of this noble family until the death of Richard Nevil, Earl of Warwick, who was slain at the battle of Barnet, after which his lands were seized by Edward IV., and this castle and manor were granted to Richard, Duke of Gloucester, the King's brother, who had married Ann, the daughter of Warwick. Richard, after the death of his brother, arrested Anthony Woodville, Earl of Rivers, (who was conducting Edward, the eldest son of the late king, from Ludlow to London), and sent him prisoner to Sheriff Hutton Castle, but he was afterwards removed to Pontefract Castle, and there beheaded with Lord Grey.

After Richard had accomplished his cruel purpose by murdering the two young princes, (Edward V. and his brother) he imprisoned in this castle Edward Plantagenet, Earl of Warwick, his brother's son, and also his niece the princess Elizabeth, on her refusal to marry him. They both continued in confinement here till the fatal affray at Bosworth-field.

During the time of the insurrection in the North, Henry VII., who held the castle in his own hands, sent Thomas Howard, Earl of Surrey, the hero of Flodden and afterwards Duke of Norfolk, to quell

the insurgents. He resided here between the years 1490 and 1500, as well as probably at intervals in later years.

Leland gives the following description of the castle while it was yet in its glory :—"The castle of Shirhutton, as I learned there, was builded by Rafe Nevil, of Raby, the first Earl of Westmoreland of the Neviles ; and I heard that in hys time, he builded or greatly augmented, or repared three castells byside. There is a base court with houses of offices beside the entering. The castell itself in front is not ditched, but it standeth *in loco utumque edito*. I marked in the fore front of the first area of the castell three greate and high towres, of the which the gate house was the middle. In the second area be five or six towres, and the stately stair up to the haull is very magnificent ; and so is the haull itself, and all the residue of the house, insomuch that I saw no house in the north so like a princely lodging. This castell is well maintained by reason that the late Duke of Norfolk lay theare ten yeares, and sins then the Duke of Richmond. Ther is a park by it."

The castle was dismantled in the time of James I., and but little idea can be formed from its ruins of its original grandeur.

Sheriff-Hutton being about ten miles north-east of York, was doubtless supplied in the earliest days of Methodism by preachers from that city. There appear to have been regular services held in the village in 1759, or earlier. In that year, John Atlay, one of Mr. Wesley's early preachers, was convincod of sin. In "a short account," written by himself, and published in the first volume of the *Methodist*

Magazine, he gives the following account of his early life:—

“I was born at Sheriff-Hutton, in the county of York, in December, 1736. I was kept at school till fourteen years of age, and was then employed by my father in all the branches of husbandry. His violent temper (though he seriously feared God) sometimes drove me almost to despair, and sometimes earnestly to seek God, from whom I had deep impressions from my childhood. I used to go to the Sacrament at all opportunities from the time I was sixteen years old, and was often deeply affected thereby, and so lastingly as to be preserved from outward sin.

“In January, 1759, when I was about two-and-twenty, I heard Hannah Harrison give an exhortation. Five or six of us went into a room together just as she was repeating,

‘Come, Lord the drooping sinner cheer,
Nor let Thy chariot wheels delay!
Appear, in my poor heart, appear!
My God, my Saviour, come away.’

“I was cut to the heart. I could neither speak nor stir. I was convinced there was something in religion which I had never known. We returned home, but those words

‘My God, my Saviour, come away.’

were continually sounding in my heart, and from that time another young man and I forsook all our trifling company.

“About a month after, I heard John Manners

at York, and was deeply convinced that I was a lost, undone sinner. I could not sleep all night, and in the morning invited him to come and preach in my father's house. When I came home on Sunday, I told my father. He was exceeding angry, and protested he should never preach there. I pleaded much, but in vain. When he went to church, I shut myself in and earnestly prayed that God would change his heart. After he came home, he said, 'I have never been so uneasy at church in all my life. I could not keep these words out of my mind, 'If thou rejectest this offer of salvation, perhaps thou wilt never have another.' He shall come, whatever be the consequence.' I took knowledge that God heareth prayer. He came on Tuesday, and preached to a large, quiet congregation, and that night my father and two of my sisters were convinced of sin.

"For near three weeks I could scarce either sleep or eat but just enough to keep life. On April 1st, having spent most of the night in prayer, I felt those words applied to my soul with inexpressible power 'Fear not, for I have redeemed thee.' I then saw as I had never done before the whole mystery of our redemption, and could not possibly doubt but that I was reconciled to God through the Son of His love. * * * * *

"From this time I was exhorting every company wherein I was, and God continually confirmed what was spoken, but especially to the class whereof I was Leader, most of whom were justified in a few months. Afterwards I was persuaded to hold weekly prayer-meetings, at which I likewise gave a word of

exhortation ; by seeing the fruit of which I was more and more stirred up, till zeal for God as it were eat me up. After a time I was desired to supply the place of one and another preacher, and when Mr. Pawson and Mr. Henderson were in the York Circuit, Mr. Henderson being taken ill, I was prevailed upon to supply his place for a month ; and afterwards, though I followed my father's business the rest of the week, I generally preached two, three, or four times on a Sunday."

Soon after this he appears to have entered on the regular work of the ministry, and to have laboured some years without any very marked success. In 1773, he went to London ; Mr. Wesley made him his book-steward, which office he filled for some years. In 1789, a dispute arose between the Conference and the trustees of a new chapel at Dewsbury, who claimed the right to reject any preachers they disapproved of ; Mr. Wesley refusing to allow this, the trustees usurped the property. In Mr. Wesley's *Journal*, August 1, 1789, he says, " We (the Conference) considered the case of the Dewsbury house, which the self-elected trustees have robbed us of. So they chose John Atlay for a preacher, who adopted William Eells for his curate. Nothing remained but to build another preaching-house, toward which we subscribed £206 on the spot."

Mr. Atlay's connection with the Trustees did not prove a happy one. After various trials, he left them ; and died after enduring a great fight of afflictions, and was interred in the churchyard of his native village. The leading feature which his friends claim

for him on his tomb is that "he was the intimate friend of the Rev. John Wesley."

Hannah Harrison, who was instrumental in first awakening Mr. Atlay to a sense of his sinfulness, was a very remarkable woman. The following particulars concerning her are taken from the *Methodist Magazine* for 1802, and are from the pen of the Rev. John Pawson :—

"Her father belonged to the Presbyterian congregation ; he was a common brewer in the city of York, and a very respectable man in his line of life. He was one of the first members of our Society in that city, and was Steward of it in 1762, when I was stationed in York Circuit. Hannah was brought to the saving knowledge of God about the same time with her father. Mr. Harrison had a sister of the name of Shipton, who kept a boarding school in York. She belonged to the same Meeting with her brother, but was so greatly exasperated against the Methodists at their first coming to York that she made a song respecting them, that she might hold them forth to ridicule. Mrs. Shipton had a son, a master bricklayer in York, who was as deeply prejudiced against the Methodists as his mother. This poor man would stand and curse the people as they went to the preaching. At last he thought he would venture into the preaching-house for once, and hear what they had to say. He did so, and heard with great attention for some time ; at length he was struck down to the ground in a moment, and being a remarkably stout man, he made the very floor shake with his fall. As soon as he was able, he got upon his hands and knees and crawled out.

From that hour he was certainly possessed by the devil, and was made a spectacle to all who had the curiosity and sufficient courage to go and see him. He was wonderfully and variously tormented for a considerable time, till the Methodists kept two days of fasting and prayer for him. On the second day, the Lord was intreated for him and fully delivered him. He joined the Society, and for a considerable time was very serious; but afterwards, in some degree he grew less so, and was again afflicted at times as he had been before. Mr. John Hall, who was then a barber, told me that he used to be afraid to shave him, because all on a sudden, without any sort of warning, while sitting in a chair he would have gone feet over head over the back of the chair in a moment. How can this be accounted for?

“Mr. Harrison was extremely fond of his daughter Hannah. I have seen the good old man quite in a rapture of joy at the sight of her when she returned home from one of her visits in the country.

“Mrs. Harrison gives the following account of her own early life and conversion:—‘I was born in the year 1734. At six years of age I was very unhappy because I could not be good. Both my parents were serious Dissenters; but losing my pious mother when only eight years of age I fell into the hands of those who took great pains to qualify me for being a useful member of society in this world, but who knew very little of that which is to come. At thirteen, by a violent pain in my head, I was entirely deprived of sight. Where then was my promised pleasure? My good father spared no expense in endeavouring to get my

sight restored, many doctors were consulted. At fifteen I was pronounced incurable. Had what I then felt been eternal, it would have been a hell indeed! I endeavoured to pray, but could not, and would have thanked any one to tell me what I must do to be saved.

“In the year 1750, I providentially heard Mr. Samuel Larwood, at Acomb, near York, and was pleased with his deliberate manner of preaching, but could not understand his meaning. Soon after, I heard brother T. Mitchell, but still was no wiser. In November, 1750, I was convinced of sin because of *unbelief*, by the instrumentality of our late venerable brother, Jonathan Maskew. In May, 1751, my dear father invited the preachers to his house, and in less than three days, I was enabled to believe on the Lord Jesus Christ with a living faith. I then hoped the design of Providence was fully answered, and repeatedly prayed for the restoration of my sight. But what was my distress when I was made sensible that my sight was taken away to draw me out of common life, and would be withheld to prepare me for a sphere of greater usefulness. The rebellion of my will exceeded description. The Searcher of hearts knows that, though styled the Leader of two bands, and two classes, it was six years before I could say, (without a drawback), ‘Thy will be done.’ About that time, brother John Haime visited us, and preached several awakening sermons, proving the necessity of sanctification. Sister R. Hall was deeply convinced of the necessity of what was then called ‘a farther work of grace,’ which she received in a few months. John Manners

professed to have the same experience. But such was my opposition to this doctrine, that I walked seven miles one frosty morning to convince Mr. Manners he was in a delusion. For ever adored be that wisdom which enabled him to convince me, that without the same experience, I would neither be comfortable here, nor meet for that degree of glory which then appeared my purchased privilege. From this time I began to seek for full sanctification. While receiving the Lord's Supper, I felt the application of those words, 'Thou art sealed unto the day of redemption.' The Thursday morning following, when at private prayer, I was so overwhelmed with the Divine presence, that I cried out, 'Lord can what I feel proceed from any but Thee?' and the language of my heart was,—

' I yield, I yield
I can hold out no more,
I sink, by dying love compell'd,
And own Thee conqueror.'

"My next inquiry was, 'Lord, how shall I glorify Thee;' and the answer was, 'by keeping silence.' But I asked, 'Must I hide this light under a bushel?' and it was again suggested, 'Your light will shine more if you keep silence.' I knew obedience was better than sacrifice, and upon that principle concealed what I had received for more than five months. I then felt a desire to meet in the select band, and was introduced by one of the preachers, but was sharply interrogated and told by one (who is, I doubt not, worshipping before the throne,) that all I said appeared false. The consequence was, none of the good people were permitted to receive my

testimony till Mr. Wesley came to York, who entirely removed their objections."

In her forty-seventh year she was deprived of all her worldly property, and removed, by Mr. Wesley's advice, to London, where she says :—"My honoured friend, Mr. Wesley, introduced me to those who have supplied my wants to this day, September 1st, 1799." Speaking of her loss she says :—"the friendly Mr. and Mrs. D——, took me to their home in the country. My distress was unspeakable, but He, who in all our afflictions was afflicted, discovered Himself to my intellectual view with the countenance of a tender Father who had now conquered a rebellious child. I imagined I heard a voice express,—‘This is that degree of conformity to my image for which you have long prayed.’ I am indeed a standing monument that ‘the heart knoweth its own bitterness, and a stranger intermeddleth not with its joy.’” This holy woman died, after a life of great usefulness, in London, in 1800. Mr. Wesley, in referring to the loss of her property, said,—“The stones of the street will be converted into bread sooner than Hannah Harrison shall want."

The perusal of this narrative introduces us to one or two more of those early evangelists by which Methodism was introduced into Sheriff Hutton and neighbourhood. The first of these, John Manners, was born at Sledmere, near Malton, in 1731. He was singularly useful in the revival which began in 1760, and particularly in the year 1762 in the city of Dublin. Mr. Wesley says of him :—"He was a plain man, of middling sense, and not eloquent, but rather rude in speech ; one who had never before

been remarkably useful, but seemed to be raised up for this single work : and as soon as it was done, he fell into a consumption, languished awhile, and died." Mr. Manners died in 1763, in York, and was buried in St. Saviour's churchyard, in that city. Alexander Mather, who was also very useful in the early history of the Circuit, was afterwards interred in the same grave.

Thomas Mitchell was also a Yorkshireman, having been born at Bingley, in 1726. He was converted under the Rev. William Grimshaw, Vicar of Haworth, and began to preach in 1751. In the faithful discharge of his duty he suffered much. On one occasion, in Lincolnshire, he nearly lost his life by a lawless mob. They stripped him of his apparel, painted him from head to foot with white paint, threw him several times into a pond of water, and at last carried him in triumph out of the parish with nothing upon him but an old coat ; they set him upon a little hill, and then shouted,—“ God save the king, and the d—l take the preacher.” “ He was a very plain, honest, pious man, and after spending near forty years in the service of his Divine Master, he finished his course with great joy in 1786.”

John Haime was one of those Methodist soldiers who so greatly distinguished themselves at the battle of Fontenoy. After his discharge from the army, he became a travelling preacher, and died at Whitchurch, in Hampshire, in 1784. In his account of his life, he says :—“ On May 1st, 1745, we had a full trial of our faith at Fontenoy. This day God was pleased to prove our little flock, and to shew them His power. They showed such courage and

boldness in the fight, as made the officers as well as soldiers amazed. When William Clements had his arm broken by a musket ball, they would have carried him out of the battle, but he said, 'No, I have an arm left to hold my sword, I will not go yet.' When another shot broke his other arm, he said, 'I am as happy as I can be out of Paradise.' John Evans having both his legs taken off by a cannon ball, was laid across a cannon to die, where, as long as he could speak, he was praising God with joyful lips.

"For my own part, I stood the hottest fire of the enemy for several hours. But I told my comrades, 'the French have no ball made that will kill me this day. After about seven hours, a cannon ball killed my horse under me. An officer cried out aloud, 'Haime, where is your God now?' I answered, 'Sir, He is here with me, and He will bring me out of this battle.' Presently a cannon ball took off his head. I was exposed both to the enemy and to our own horse, but that did not discourage me at all, for I knew the God of Jacob was with me. I had a long way to go through all our horse, the balls flying on every side. The hotter the battle grew, the more strength was given me." Who can be surprised that with leaders like those we have sketched, and embracing heartily the doctrines they set forth, the early Methodists should be brave and fearless, going forth "conquering, and to conquer."

The chapel was erected in 1794, and settled on the Model Deed. A day school was also built on ground near the chapel some twenty years ago.

In 1800, the Society had twenty-five members, contributing £1 1s. to the Quarterly Meeting, and £1 to the Mission Funds. For the first thirty years after that time, the members increased more rapidly at Sheriff Hutton than at any other place in the Circuit, numbering in 1826 one hundred and twenty-six members. For the years 1827 to 1831, the contributions to the quarter board were larger from Sheriff Hutton than any other place in the Circuit. The number of members at present in Society there is seventy, and the contribution to Missions for 1871 was £43.

For some years previous to his death, which took place in 1848, there resided in this village a very useful and devoted Local-preacher.—Francis Barr, “the village cooper,” better known as Franky Barr, born at Laddle Gill, near Helmsley, in 1779. On attaining manhood, he was convinced of his sinfulness, which conviction was greatly deepened by reading the works of the Rev. John Fletcher. He seems to have imbibed the loving spirit and holy devotion of this good man. On becoming a Local-preacher it was found that he had great adaptation for special revival services, and for many years he was thus engaged. Many were brought to God under his preaching. He became a popular Missionary advocate; his celebrated speech, “The Wesleyan Missionary Ship,” showed his great genius and adaptation for the work he had taken in hand.

At the Conference of last year, 1871, it was decided that one of the Circuit Ministers should reside at Sheriff Hutton; and in accordance with that

decision the Rev. S. T. House has resided there since that time.

THORNTON.

A SMALL Society was formed at Thornton in 1813, consisting of Francis Spavin, Leader, Elizabeth Spavin, Mary Frank, William and Ann Spenseley, Hannah Noble, Dorothy Ascough and Margaret Tennant ; and from this time, though without making much progress for some years, the village appears regularly on the Circuit records. In 1822 a piece of ground was purchased for a chapel, the trustees being Francis Spavin, above mentioned ; John Wales, of the city of York, Yeoman ; Thomas Wright, of Flaxton ; John Precious ; John Cordukes and John Commins, of Thornton ; Benjamin Lund and George Smailes, of Sheriff Hutton ; and Robert Jackson, of Farlington. The population of the village and neighbourhood being but small, the cause there has never been of large proportions, the number of members at present in Society there being twenty-one.

FARLINGTON.

FARLINGTON appears to have had regular preaching services at a very early date, probably from the same time as Sheriff Hutton. There died at Farlington in 1837 "an old disciple," Ann Davell, in the 94th year of her age, having been a member of Society seventy-three years. "She received the Ministers of Christ into her house for many years, and most affectionately entertained them." In 1800, Farlington had nineteen members in Society ; and anticipating the wants of the Circuit, had in 1799 made a collection for furniture, amounting to fourteen shillings. In 1805, a list of the members of Society is given, numbering at that time only fifteen members ; they are James Beal, Leader, Alice Beal, William and Ann Davell, John and Hannah Snowden, John and Hannah Mitchell, Priscilla Coverdale, William and Elizabeth Johnson, Robert Hodgson, Mary Oliver, and Robert Hobson. Mr. Beal seems to have been one of the most active officers of the Circuit for many years, serving as Circuit Steward frequently, was one of the earliest subscribers to the West India Missions, and the Leader of the class in Farlington until his death.

STILLINGTON.

At the commencement of the present century the Society at Stillington numbered eleven members, with George Walker as their Leader. He appears also to have been for a long period one of the Circuit Stewards, having had the honour to be the first elected to that office on the formation of the Circuit, and for the first twenty years of its history took a leading position in all its business transactions and was a liberal supporter of its various funds. In this he appears to have found a friend and colleague in George Barker, who in the later years of his life also lived at Stillington and died there in June, 1835. "Mr. Barker lived without the knowledge of experimental religion until his thirty-sixth year, when he was led by the providence of God to hear the Methodist preachers, and obtained a clear view of his state as a sinner and of the need he had of an interest in Christ. He sought the Lord diligently and found Him to the joy of his soul. In the year 1800 he gave himself to God and His church, of which he continued a steady member to the end of his life. For more than thirty years he filled at different times the offices of Trustee, Circuit Steward, Class Leader, and Local-preacher, the latter with a punctuality seldom excelled, and no man had greater delight in his work."

In 1802, in response to a letter from Dr. Coke, a collection was made at several places in the Circuit in behalf of the Missions of the Society, then con-

financed principally to the West Indies, and called the West India Missions; Stillington was one of the places making this collection to the amount of three shillings and sixpence.

In 1812 the Society had increased to fifty-nine members and their quarterly contributions from ten shillings and sixpence to three pounds five shillings and sixpence. Ten years later the membership was reduced to forty, and never seems again to have reached the number to which it had attained sixty years ago. A large and commodious chapel was erected in 1844; Mr. William Farrar, through whose energy and under whose superintendence it was built, being the principal contributor.

One of Mr. Wesley's preachers, George Warne, went out from Marton, near Stillington. He was a young man of uncommon seriousness and deep piety. In the year 1779, he gave himself up to the work of the ministry, and came out as an itinerant preacher. His appointment was to the Nottingham Circuit, where he met with some heavy trials which greatly discouraged him. His talents for the ministry were but small, but his piety, his love for souls, and his zeal for the glory of God were great.

He soon, however, finished his course. He received a second appointment at the Conference of 1780 for Gloucester, but was not spared to fulfil it, for on the 11th of August, 1780, he was taken to his eternal rest in the twenty-sixth year of his age.

SUTTON.

UNTIL the year 1815, the members of Society in Sutton seem to have been included in the Huby return. At that time twenty-one members met in class with George Barker as Leader. This office he seems to have filled until his removal to Stillington, when his sons William and for a while Thomas, were appointed to the office. The latter gentleman built a chapel for the Society, which he afterwards enlarged, and in which the Society worshipped for many years; the present neat and commodious building having been erected in 1864 at a cost of £420.

The late Rev. William Carlton was born at Sutton in 1779. "His parents attended the parish church regularly, and to the best of their knowledge trained up their children in the fear of God. When about fifteen years old, he became the subject of religious impressions, and began regularly to attend the old Methodist chapel in York. His earnest and devout demeanour attracted notice, and he was invited to join the class of the venerable Richard Burdsall. He did so, and for many Sundays walked from Sutton to York, a distance of eight miles, in time to meet the Leader at eight o'clock in the morning. On one of these visits the burden of his sins pressed heavily upon him; and while returning home alone, he knelt down by the road-side and wrestled with God in prayer until he was filled with 'joy and peace in believing.' He was appointed to various

offices, and toiled in them so diligently and zealously that he seemed marked out for more extensive usefulness. His own convictions of a Divine call to preach the Gospel were deep and abiding, and at the Conference of 1808 he was called to the ministry. At an early period of his itinerant career, while crossing one of the Derbyshire hills, he was overtaken by a snow-storm by which his life was endangered, and of which the injurious effects were felt by him to the end of his days in the almost total loss of hearing. But, notwithstanding this, he was for many years an eminently acceptable and useful Minister, and had much fruit of his labours. When he was compelled by increasing infirmities to become a Supernumerary, he gladly rendered whatever services he could ; and his cheerful piety and firm faith in God never failed him. As he drew near his end, he suffered much, but always expressed himself as very happy and called on his family to join him in praising God ; he fell asleep in Jesus on December 10th, 1855, in the seventy-sixth year of his age, and the forty-eighth of his ministry. He was a very cheerful and devoted Christian ; his attachment to Wesleyan Methodism was enlightened and unfailing ; and he was ' faithful unto death.' "

The Rev. Richard Shephard, Missionary to New Brunswick, was also a native of Sutton. After several years of labour there, Mr. S. left the Society.

The celebrated Lawrence Sterne was Vicar of Sutton, and resided there from 1740 to 1760, preaching also at Stillington. In the latter year the parsonage was destroyed by fire, when Mr. Sterne removed to Coxwold.

HUBY.

WHEN the Circuit was first organized in 1800, Huby appears then, and for some time afterwards, to have been one of its principal places: only Easingwold and Helmsley contributed a larger amount to the Quarterly Meeting; and in the following year, 1802, a larger amount was sent as a contribution to the Yearly Collection and the Kingswood Schools from Huby than from any other place in the Circuit. The Society at that time numbered forty-one members; it was also one of the five places in the Circuit that in 1801 made a collection for the West India Missions. The chapel was erected in 1800, the original trustees being George Barker, of Sutton-on-the-Forest, Gentleman; John Jackson, the elder, and John Jackson, the younger, Coopers; Thomas Farmery, of the same place, Tailor; Matthew Betterby, John Anderson, William Hill, the younger, William Bravenor, Ralph Snowden, the younger, Robert Grangby, all of Huby, Yeomen; and James Beal, of Farlington, Yeoman; not only have all these original Trustees passed away, but there is scarcely a name represented in the membership of the Circuit at the present day. George Barker is noticed in the Memorials of Stillington; Thomas Farmery lived to a good old age and died a honoured father in Israel; and James Beal seems to have taken a leading interest in the affairs of the Circuit for many years. Probably in 1801 it also included Sutton, as at that time there was no preaching and it is

presumed no Society there: but in 1812, Huby alone had seventy members, and Sutton twenty-two; with the exception of Easingwold, the Society was then and for some little time after the largest contributor to the Quarter-board in the Circuit. In 1817, a separate return was made of the Sutton Society and from that time for a long period, the liberality of the Huby Methodists seems to have declined. In late years, however, this liberality has to some extent revived, though Methodism seems now to occupy a much less important position in the village than it did from fifty to sixty years ago, as at present the number of members of Society in Huby is only twenty-six.

In the opinion of Mr. Thomas Gill, the local historian, Huby has been a place of ecclesiastical importance in early English history. "About the middle of the town are some few remains of an old chapel, which was built before the year 1223, the place is still known by the name of Chapel Garth," and, "About half a mile from Huby, near the road leading to Tollerton, are the fragments of a ruined monastery called the Mote, presenting an area of about six hundred square yards, surrounded by a deep dyke or fosse, twelve feet in width and seven deep. It is now overgrown with oak and ash. History and tradition are both silent as to the origin of 'the Mote,' but it has most probably from its secluded situation been a Saxon monastery destroyed by the Danes on their incursions in the neighbourhood."

TOLLERTON.

ONE of the earliest places in the neighbourhood to receive the early Methodist preachers was Tollerton. In Mr. Wesley's *Journal* is the entry on Monday, April 16th, 1764,—“I preached at Tollerton at one. The congregation was large and serious. Some were deeply affected and wept much. Many received comfort.” Where the venerable founder of Methodism preached on this occasion we know not, as Myles, in his *Chronological History*, gives the date when the first chapel was opened as 1795 ; there were doubtless, however, long before this regular services and a somewhat important Society at Tollerton. In 1798, there was thirty-one members there. Two of the early Methodist preachers were natives of Tollerton. The first of these, and a man of some note, was Benjamin Colley. He united himself to the Societies in 1760, having received episcopal ordination. At that time Mr. Wesley was very particular that only such as had this qualification should officiate in his chapels in London. Mr. Colley was in accordance with this custom invited by him and went up to London ; he was there carried away by the enthusiasm of Thomas Maxfield and George Bell, who had left the Society, and in 1762 he united himself to them. “He, however, was soon convinced of his error, and being tenderly dealt with by Mr. John Manners, (who had been the honoured instrument of his conversion to God,) he was in a short time recovered from that dangerous

snare into which he had fallen, and was restored again to Mr. Wesley and the Connexion. In July, 1763, he was employed in the work of God at Newcastle-on-Tyne, where he was made a blessing to many. From there he wrote to Mr. Wesley as follows : — ‘The bar which Satan thrust in God has burst asunder. You are near unto me, I can sympathize with you in your various afflictions. To reflect upon my former conduct, that added to the weight you endured, now pains me. Though *you* have forgiven me, I cannot forgive *myself*. I cannot bring into words how I loathe and abhor myself ; O that you and I may abhor this spirit ! I think if ever I had scriptural experience it is now. I have continued to preach morning and evening, though often tempted to give over through the cloudiness of my understanding, and my various, horrible conflicts within. Though I did not then see it, the Lord was with me in the fire, and though it was as much as I could bear, yet there was a way for my escape. His hand sustained me, and I am now (O for gratitude !) brought into a wealthy place. I keep off from the contention as much as possible, both in preaching and conversation, and enforce repentance, faith, and holiness, both of heart and practice. This is the only way that I can find to pull down the strongholds of Satan.’ ”

Mr. Colley continued to labour faithfully and with a degree of success for several years. He witnessed a good confession before many witnesses in his last moments, and died full of faith and the love of God, rejoicing in hope of the glory that shall be revealed at the resurrection of the just. Mr. Wesley, in his *Journal*, says, “Sunday, November 8th,

1767, I buried the remains of that excellent young man Benjamin Colley. He did *rejoice evermore, and pray without ceasing*, but I believe his backsliding cost him his life. From the time he missed his way, by means of Mr. Maxfield, he went heavily all his days. God indeed restored his peace, but left him to be buffeted of Satan in an uncommon manner, and his trials did not end but with his life. However, some of his last words were 'Tell all the Society, tell all the world, I die without fear.'"

The other Minister referred to was the Rev. Thomas Vasey, who entered the ministry in 1800. In the *Methodist Magazine* for 1820, is an autobiographical sketch, part of which we here reprint:—

"I can remember well the strivings of the Spirit of God with me when I was about eight years of age. My mind was greatly troubled when I read or recollected those passages of the Holy Scriptures which denounce the doom of the wicked. Yet was I not deterred from forming an acquaintance with wicked companions who led me astray, till I became a willing captive and my deceitful heart was filled with all unrighteousness. The Methodist preachers had visited my father's house for some time, and my parents constrained me to go and hear them; but this was a duty which I abhorred, and when by any artifice or cunning I could avoid it, I did. This increased the inveteracy of my depraved habits, so that before I was twelve years of age I was one of the wickedest wretches in the village. To read a chapter in the Bible was now become an intolerable task, and I only felt pleasure in following the devices of a corrupt heart.

“At times, when hearing the word preached, I was constrained to acknowledge the truth, and saw clearly that I was in a state of misery and danger. When I returned home, I often indulged a peevish temper and sought a quarrel with my brothers and sisters, being filled with hellish rage and envy when I saw them more happy than myself. On the Sabbath I strove to elude the vigilance of my mother, and run with my wicked companions to play, although I was sure of receiving severe chastisement for my disobedience. In this perverse and wicked course I continued till I was fifteen years old, although the Spirit of God strove with me, and my fears added to my misery. One night I dreamed that I was in a field, and looking up, I thought I saw the elements dissolving, and the earth around me all in flames ; when the words, ‘The earth, and all the works therein, shall be burnt up!’ sounded in my ears. I saw no way of escape ; felt no hope of mercy to cheer ; I fell to the ground, and awoke in great terror. Another night, when musing on my state, I said, ‘Should I die this night, I shall surely awake in hell.’ The horror of my mind was indescribable ; but after a night of suffering and alarm, I contrived, with the return of day, to shake off my guilty fears.

“When Mr. William Percival was in the Circuit, he held a watchnight, at which I was present. The sermon had a very awakening effect on my mind,—the terrors of the Lord laid hold upon me and I trembled exceedingly. My sins were placed in dread array before me, and my heart began to melt. After the sermon, William Smith gave an exhortation ; when my wound was deepened, and I feared to

lift up mine eyes to heaven, lest I should meet the frown of Him whom I had so often offended, whose counsel I had rejected, and whose mercy I had abused. After the exhortation, several friends prayed, and I began to join in the exercise, and was more affected with sorrow and shame. I feared lest any one should discover my distress, and by coming to speak to me make it public, as was the case with a young person, my relation. This my fear was no security for me, for, in a short time, it was the common talk of the place. The Methodists now took notice of me, and from their conversation I derived encouragement, and sought the Lord earnestly.

“About this time I paid a visit to my relations at Stonegrave. On the 22nd of June, 1794, I called on Mr. Smith at Easingwold, and we walked together; but as we had no conversation on the subject of religion, he did not discover my trouble and affliction. At Ness, he preached on Prov. x. 24, ‘The fear of the wicked, it shall come upon him; but the desire of the righteous shall be granted.’ A solemn season it was to me. My apprehensions of the wrath of God were overwhelming. It appeared as a black cloud hanging over my guilty soul ready to burst upon me. I felt as a person chained to a rock, and knew not what to do. In the afternoon I was permitted to attend at the love-feast, and as there was at that time a revival of religion in the Circuit, the people were very lively and spoke without restraint. Many were much affected, and cried out for the disquietude of their souls. Some were triumphing in the God of their salvation. I was on my knees earnestly praying for pardoning

mercy. I received some comfort from a discovery of the Lord Jesus Christ as a suitable and willing Saviour. I hoped speedily to be saved from my guilty load, which I felt intolerable and too heavy for me to bear. On Monday night I met in my uncle's class, and whilst the people were telling of the loving-kindness of the Lord, I sunk down upon my knees and cried aloud for mercy. All joined in prayer for me; my uncle exhorted me to believe on the Lord Jesus Christ for present salvation. At this time my youngest sister prayed in an agony for me. I was enabled to believe on the Lord Jesus Christ; and I felt in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, such a change in my mind as words cannot express. I exultingly said, 'O Lord, I will praise Thee, for though Thou wast angry with me, Thine anger is turned away, and Thou comfortest me.' On Thursday I returned home filled with the love of God, and immediately joined the Society. Meeting in class was now made a special blessing to me, as here I received instruction and comfort. I was like a new recruit, I lived freely upon the bounty which my Captain had bestowed, and shouted my Redeemer's praise night and day." Having thus realized the assurance of God's favour, he sought henceforth to live to His glory. He soon began to preach to those around him; and in 1800 was sent as a supply to the Barrow Circuit. He laboured acceptably and usefully for eighteen years, when he died. His son and namesake, the Rev. Thomas Vasey, died in Harrogate, in 1871, having been for more than thirty years one of the most able and faithful ministers of modern Methodism.

The number of members in Society had increased from thirty at the commencement to seventy in the present year; and the congregation having also increased greatly, it was determined in 1869 to erect a new and larger chapel on the site of the one erected seventy-five years before. This was done from designs by Mr. E. Taylor of York, at a cost of £630, which through the liberality of the friends was all provided within twelve months of the opening. The new chapel is very commodious, well built, neatly finished, and well filled with an attentive congregation, to whom it is hoped it will prove a great blessing. In order the better to supply the spiritual wants of the village and district around, an additional Minister was appointed to the Circuit at the Conference of 1871, to reside at Tollerton; and in accordance with this decision the Rev. J. H. Corson has resided there during the past year.

Large and well appointed school premises were built on property adjoining the chapel some ten years ago, in which a flourishing day school in accordance with the Wesleyan system has since been conducted.

The most liberal supporter of all the funds of early Methodism in the Circuit was Mr. Leak, who resided near Tollerton; Messrs. Hobson, Cattle, Shepard, and Fawcett, also connected with this Society, were for the greater portion of the first half century amongst its warmest and best friends.

ALNE.

At the time of the formation of the Circuit in 1800, the contributions from Alne amounted to fourteen shillings. The Society numbered nine members, viz.: William Wetherill, Leader of the class, Ann Plummer, Mary Hall, Abraham and Ann Swales, John Eagle, Elizabeth Smith, George Steel, and Martha Welbourn. In 1812, the number of members was reduced to five. From this time, for many years, the Society appeared to progress more steadily than any other in the Circuit. In 1814 their first Missionary collection was made in Alne, amounting to £1 5s. 6½d. Several names of persons long connected with Methodism in Alne are at this time found on the record ; as, in addition to some of the above, we find John Hopwood, Leader, Robert Flawith, John Dodd, Peter and Ann Matterson, Ann Gill, Dorothy Robinson, Elizabeth Hopwood, Richard Smithson, and James and Sarah Cariss. Mr. Robert Shepard, so long connected with the Alne Society as a Leader, and so well known as a warm friend and liberal supporter of the various institutions of Methodism, being at this time a member at Tollerton. The Society appears to have made rapid increase during the years of revival when Messrs. Sedgwick and Haswell were in the Circuit. In 1820-21 the Society was doubled. In connection with this revival is the following entry in the Circuit book for 1819, in the handwriting of the late Mr. Shepard: "March 30th, 1819. Mr. George Barker and Mr.

C. T. Bainbridge elected Stewards, Mr. William Smith and Robert Shepard having stood that office two years. 'O Lord, revive Thy work, we beseech thee.' " This prayer was doubtless entered in the Circuit book as the result of a conversation, and probably of prayer, in the Quarterly Meeting, and perhaps it was in answer to the spirit of intercession that went out from this meeting that the "showers of blessing" were poured out from on high on the Circuit in the two or three following years.

In 1828 the Society at Alne numbered sixty-two members. They worshipped for many years in a chapel adjoining the garden of Mrs. Shepard, but in 1848 the present larger and more commodious chapel was erected in which the Society has since worshipped.

THOLTHORP.

THE first entry of Tholthorp on the Circuit books is in 1813, when the Society numbered seven members,—Richard Cordukes, Leader, Rachael, Ruth and Mary Cordukes, William and Ann Critchison and John Brotherton. Regular preaching services are believed to have been commenced in 1816. For the first fourteen or fifteen years from that time there does not seem to have been much progress made; the members in Society being generally about eight, and the amount contributed to the Quarterly Meeting 10s. 6d. per quarter. During a revival of religion in 1830 or 1831, when Messrs. Jones and Hindson were in the Circuit, their number appears to have been increased and the amount sent to the Quarterly Meeting doubled. The services were carried on for many years in a cottage in the village, afterwards in a schoolroom, till 1844, when the chapel in which the congregation have since worshipped was erected on a site presented to the Society by the late John Hawking, Esq. Since the opening of the chapel the Annual Missionary Meeting has been largely attended, and very successful; the subscription of the Society and congregation during the ten years from 1862 to 1871 inclusive, amounting to £330.

The Rev. James Critchison, at present travelling at Lancaster, a grandson of one of the first Methodists in the village, is a native of Tholthorp, and the son of an esteemed Local-preacher and Circuit Steward.

GENERAL SUMMARY.

Preachers who have travelled in the Eisingwold Circuit since its formation in 1800.

- 1800. Thomas Dixon, James Needham.
- 1801. Thomas Vasey, James Needham.
- 1802-3. Daniel Jackson, Thomas Laycock.
- 1804. Philip Hardcastle, Robert Melson.
- 1805. William Sanderson, David McNicoll.
- 1806. William Heath, John Wittam.
- 1807. William Heath, Benjamin Barrett ; William Blagborne,
part of the year as supply for Mr. Heath.
- 1808. William Warrener, John Wheelhouse.
- 1809. William Warrener, Samuel Bardsley.
- 1810. Samuel Bardsley, John Poole.
- 1811. John Poole, William Waterhouse.
- 1812. Samuel Gates, Joseph Frank.
- 1813. Samuel Gates, William Catton.
- 1814-15. John Booth, Henry Ranson.
- 1816. William Welbourn, John Dace.
- 1817. William Welbourn, Robert Bentham.
- 1818. John Sedgwick, Robert Bentham.
- 1819-20. John Sedgwick, John P. Haswell.
- 1821. Philip Hardcastle, John P. Haswell.
- 1822. Philip Hardcastle, John Nowell.
- 1823. Robert Millar, Chairman of the District, John Nowell ;
John Corbett, assistant to Mr. Millar.
- 1824-25. Richard Phillips, Ralph Gibson.
- 1826-27. David Deakin, Thomas Ballinghall.
- 1828-29. Thomas Garbutt, John Roadhouse.
- 1830. Thomas Garbutt, James C. Hindson.
- 1831-32. James Jones, James C. Hindson.
- 1833-34. John Raby, John Gill.
- 1835-36. William Waterhouse, Joseph Frank.
- 1837. William Coultas, William Harrison.
- 1838. William Coultas, William Harrison, Charles North.
- 1839. James Bate, William Carlton, William H. Robson

1840. James Bate, William Carlton, Charles G. Turton.
 1841. William Carlton, Joseph Cheesewright, John Mollard.
 1842. William Ash, Joseph Cheesewright, William T. Radcliffe.
 1843. William Ash, William T. Radcliffe, William North.
 1844. William Ash, William T. Radcliffe, William North ; John Brewster part of the year as supply for Mr. North.
 1845. Peter Wilkinson, Joseph Nicholson, James Roberts.
 1846. Peter Wilkinson, James Roberts, John Harding, Joseph Nicholson, *Super.*
 1847. William Wilkinson, James Roberts, John Harding.
 1848-49. William Wilkinson, William Drewitt, William Stevinson.
 1850. Josiah Hudson, Richard Stepney, William Stevinson.
 1851-52. Josiah Hudson, Richard Stepney, James Kendall.
 1853. John Rossell, John Parry, James Kendall.
 1854. John Rossell, John Parry, Joseph Mortimer.
 1855. John Rossell, John Wesley Thomas, John Parry ; William M. Stapleton part of the year as supply for Mr. Parry.
 1856-57. Richard Hornabrook, John W. Thomas, Richard Sergeant, John Parry, *Supernumerary.*
 1858.* Richard Hornabrook, Richard Sergeant, Alexander T. Weir, *Supernumerary.*
 1859. Samuel Lucas, Alfred Lockyer, Alexander T. Weir, *Supernumerary.*
 1860-61. Samuel Lucas, Alfred Lockyer.
 1862-3-4. Joseph Garrett, William H. Cave.
 1865-66. Matthew Salt, William Slack.
 1867. George Patterson, William Slack.
 1868-69. George Patterson, George G. S. Thomas.
 1870. Miles B. Pickering, George G. S. Thomas.
 1871. Miles B. Pickering, Samuel T. House, John H. Corson.

Of the above list of from eighty to ninety preachers, upwards of two-thirds have "entered into rest." The self-denying and zealous labours of many of them are gratefully remembered by the people amongst whom they laboured. It is somewhat singular that during the period of seventy-two

* The Circuit was divided in 1858, Helmsley being made the head of a separate Circuit.

years since the Circuit was formed, only one Minister has died in the Circuit,—the Rev. William North,—who after a short career of great usefulness died at Helmsley in 1845.

The following list shows the number of members in Society as returned to Conference each year since 1801; and from the great interest that has always been shown in the Circuit in the Wesleyan Missionary Society, it is thought that it might gratify many to give the amounts contributed to the Society each year. This has, with some difficulty, been done, with the exception of seven years for which there is no record :—

Year.	No. of Members.			Amount Contributed to Foreign Missions.		
1801	.	.	470	£4	12	9 $\frac{3}{4}$
1802	.	.	463	6	12	5 $\frac{1}{2}$
1803	.	.	460			
1804	.	.	465	12	0	0
1805	.	.	460			
1806	.	.	433			
1807	.	.	468			
1808	.	.	431			
1809	.	.	483	22	2	0
1810	.	.	523	19	17	8
1811	.	.	633			
1812	.	.	640			
1813	.	.	630	18	18	7
1814	.	.	630	20	14	10 $\frac{1}{2}$
1815	.	.	640	30	0	0
1816	.	.	646	32	12	0
1817	.	.	764	42	16	9
1818	.	.	700	64	14	1
1819	.	.	620	94	19	2 $\frac{1}{2}$
1820	.	.	810	87	15	9
1821	.	.	872	94	13	8
1822	.	.	980	107	6	10
1823	.	.	940	105	13	4
1824	.	.	850	101	14	2

Year.	No. of Members.		Amount Contributed to Foreign Missions.	
1825	.	.	114	12 8
1826	.	.	116	13 2
1827	.	.	138	10 5
1828	.	.	113	14 5
1829	.	.	153	2 2
1830	.	.	148	10 10
1831	.	.	150	1 11
1832	.	.	147	12 9
1833	.	.	153	14 3
1834	.	.	161	11 0
1835	.	.	185	2 6
1836	.	.	248	8 8
1837	.	.	279	14 2
1838	.	.	290	18 8
1839	.	.	352	12 10
1840	.	.	418	14 5
1841	.	.	373	4 7
1842	.	.	406	0 8
1843	.	.	425	5 4
1844	.	.	423	7 6
1845	.	.	^a 607	3 0
1846	.	.	^b 542	13 1½
1847	.	.	393	7 9¼
1848	.	.	370	4 4½
1849	.	.	394	9 1
1850	.	.	327	0 2
1851	.	.	340	4 8
1852	.	.	394	9 7
1853	.	.	382	16 4
1854	.	.	402	5 6
1855	.	.	452	2 8
1856	.	.	436	19 3
1857	.	.	426	5 0
1858	.	.	^c 1261	310 13 8
1859	.	.	341	0 6
1860	.	.	341	0 0

a This amount was realised by a Missionary Bazaar at Sheriff Hutton, producing £75 4s. 9d. ; and by legacies of late Rev. John Harrison, of Helmsley, amounting to £91 18s., in addition to the ordinary contributions.

b Including proceeds of Circuit Fair amounting to £115 15s. 10d.

c The Circuit was divided at the Conference of 1858.

Year.	No. of Members.					Amount Contributed to Foreign Missions.		
1861	.	.	.	812	.	.	390	5 0
1862	.	.	.	785	.	.	360	16 1
1863	.	.	.	781	.	.	346	2 11
1864	.	.	.	788	.	.	343	13 7
1865	.	.	.	814	.	.	313	11 8
1866	.	.	.	797	.	.	360	15 5
1867	.	.	.	762	.	.	343	5 5
1868	.	.	.	751	.	.	366	7 6
1869	.	.	.	816	.	.	362	9 11
1870	.	.	.	826	.	.	376	1 11
1871	.	.	.	812	.	.	386	11 9
1872	.	.	.	787	.	.		

We see from the above list that more than £17,000 has been contributed in the Circuit for Foreign Missionary purposes during the period to which it refers, and more than half that amount during the past twenty-five years. Special contributions were made in 1839 to the Centenary Fund, amounting to £464 14s. 4d.; in 1853, to the Relief and Extension Fund, of £188 3s.; and on the occasion of the Jubilee of the Missionary Society, in 1863, of £147 11s. 3d.

The contributions for the home work of Methodism, including the maintenance of the Ministry in the Circuit, and the amount expended in the erection, enlargement, and maintenance of its chapels during the same period, may be estimated at certainly not less than fifty per cent. above this amount. These alone would make a total of more than £42,000, the voluntary offerings of the members and congregations of the Wesleyan Methodists in the Circuit, toward the support and extension of the system which they love so well.

The Ministers connected by birth or residence

with the Circuit, and who are previously noticed in these sketches are,

	ENTERED MINISTRY.	DIED.
John Atlay, Sheriff Hutton . . .	1763 . .	
George Wawne, Marton . . .	1779 . .	1780
Thomas Vasey, Tollerton . . .	1800 . .	1818
Benjamin Colley, Tollerton . . .	1761 . .	1767
John Brown, Easingwold . . .	1802 . .	1811
John Crosby, Easingwold . . .	1783 . .	1816
John Jackson, Easingwold . . .	1816 . .	1817
Robert Newton, D.D., Easingwold . .	1799 . .	1854
T. W. Blanshard, Easingwold . . .	1859 . .	
Henry Holmes, Easingwold . . .	1858 . .	
Edward Hawkin, Easingwold . . .	1864 . .	
William Carlton, Sutton Forest . .	1808 . .	1855
Richard Shepherd, Sutton Forest . .		
George Greenwood, Huthwaite . . .	1837 . .	1865
George Tindale, Brandsby . . .	1814 . .	1825
James Critchison, Tholthorp . . .	1871 . .	

The number of chapels in the Circuit is seventeen. On several of these there are debts amounting in the aggregate to a little more than £2000. It was determined by the Quarterly Meeting in December 1870, that an effort should be made throughout the Circuit to remove this entire debt. This effort has been nobly responded to, and it is expected will be completed in the present year, 1872.

We cannot review the history of the Circuit since its foundation, without feeling devout thankfulness to Almighty God for the great blessings He has been pleased to bestow upon it. As we look back upon the labours and successes of our fathers, and upon the persecutions and sorrows of their early days, feeling thankful that we, their children, have fallen on happier times, we would not forget to

seek to be in spirit associated with them, to catch their mantle and a double portion of their spirit, that "the blessing of Him that dwelt in the bush," through whose grace they laboured, prayed, endured, and succeeded, may rest upon those their spiritual children whose duty it is to watch over the interests of this branch of His Church.

"What may be the designs of Divine Providence in the issues of these eventful times, none but authenticated prophets could declare; but the plain rule of Christian duty is sufficient guidance, warrant, and security, to our religious community. That God was with our fathers, our own conversion and incorporation into a visible, living, active, prosperous Church, is abundant demonstration; for we are the seal of their apostleship in the Lord. And the same proofs divinely given, show that the Lord is still with His servants, in blessing, and in all the proofs of a divinely-appointed Ministry. '*The best of all is, God is with us.*' This is our motto, our confidence, and our strength. But it is only by the maintenance of our apostolic doctrine and scriptural discipline;—by the cultivation of a deep sense of our obligation to the memory of our venerable Founder to maintain our Protestant consistency and to cultivate universal charity;—by increased prayer, much self-denial, strong faith, and the most cordial union and co-operation;—and, above all, by special, copious, universal effusions of the HOLY SPIRIT,—that we can be fitted for our work, or succeed in our efforts. If we maintain our purity and good works, keep ourselves aloof, as a Body, from all merely party strifes and the spirit of worldliness, and simply pursue our

course of duty 'through evil report and good report,' 'spreading scriptural holiness' through the world,—we shall continue to record glorious acquisitions from the territory of Satan, enclosed within the fold of a pure and scriptural Church of Christ,—'clear as the sun, fair as the moon, and terrible as an army with banners.' No weapon that is formed against us shall prosper, if we maintain the first principles and spirit of our FOUNDER and 'the UNITED SOCIETIES;' and every tongue that riseth up against us in judgment shall we condemn. 'IN THE LORD SHALL ALL THE SEED OF ISRAEL BE JUSTIFIED, AND SHALL GLORY.'"